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YOUNG PEOPLES' EARLY HISTORY  
OF  
BOONE COUNTY AND BELVIDERE



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## CHAPTER 1.

So the story begins:

Boone County is part of the great prairie region of Illinois. Most of the first settlers, coming as they did, from New York, Pennsylvania, and New England, were accustomed to hilly country and the sight of a farm which was level enough to plough with ease was new to them. In letters to friends back home they told of their astonishment at the meaning of the word "prairie". They had expected to see what people now call plains --- a vast, level country with trees nowhere in sight. "On the contrary, Illinois prairies are dotted with beautiful groves and considerable woodland and instead of being level the land rises and slopes in all directions with gentle hills and valleys in which small creeks run."

The largest prairies in Boone County are South Prairie in Flora, Squaw Prairie lying north of Belvidere, Bonus Prairie in Bonus Township, Long Prairie in LeRoy and East Prairie. Sometimes the young people were called by the name of the prairies on which they lived as "Bonus Prairie boy" or a "Squaw Prairie girl".

The chief river in Boone County is the Kishwaukee, which rises in McHenry and flows, with crooks and turns, in a westerly direction across the county to the Rock River. That river, in turn, finds its way to the Mississippi near Rock Island.

The next largest stream is the Piscasaw. This was quite important to the early settlers of Bonus as Little Thunder Mill depended on it for water to turn its wheels and Big Thunder Mill also had one end of its raceway in the Piscasaw. The third stream in importance is Beaver Creek.



The Beaver, while ordinarily a rather small and quiet stream often rises rapidly after a heavy rain and gives considerable trouble in keeping roads and bridges in order.

No one seems quite certain of the meaning of the Indian word Kishwaukee but it is generally thought to be "The Place of the Sycamores".

#### INDIAN TRIBES

While Boone County must have been, from early times, the home of many Indians, no very important villages appear to have been located here and no massacres are recorded within its limits. Being on the boundary line of territory held by various tribes, it seems to have been used more as a place for council. In very early times it was probably inhabited by the Illinois who had possession of much of the territory to the south. It must also have been visited by Winnebagoes who occupied the land northwest of the Rock River. The principal tribe, however, connected with the history of our county was the Pottawattomie.

This tribe was one of the sub-divisions of the Algonquins. In appearance they were tall and proud but French priests, writing about them, in the earliest histories described them as: "The most docile and affectionate toward the French of all the savages of the west."

Father Benjamin Petit wrote of them: "Monsieur, if you find in me too much ardor for the savages, you will excuse me, will you not? For, though I have known them (The Pottawattomies) only a short time, there is an inconcievable tenderness for them in the bottom of my heart which the good Lord will bless, I know."

These Indians originated in Canada but in the course of time, moved southward, finally occupying much of northern Illinois. Just before the first settlers arrived in 1835, a treaty had been made between the Pottawattomies and the government at Washington, by which the Indians agreed to give up their lands and retire beyond the Mississippi. Most of them disliked very much to go.



HOW MUCH DO YOU REMEMBER?

1. What is the difference between prairies and plains?
2. Can you trace the waters of the Kishwaukee River to the ocean?
3. Name three streams in Boone County; which, though small, was very useful? Which sometimes makes trouble?
4. What Indian tribe was most closely connected with Boone County history?



## CHAPTER 2.

### THE BLACKHAWK WAR

While the story of the Blackhawk War is not a real part of Boone County history it does give a picture of the savage background into which our first settlers came.

Blackhawk was born in the principal Sac village --- about three miles from the junction of the Rock River and the Mississippi. By the age of 15 he had so distinguished himself in feats of strength and strategy that he was "ranked among the braves". From then on his many adventures would --- and have --- filled books, and by the time of which we are writing he had become the leader of his tribe.

(Continue on next page)



Let Blackhawk describe to you his village as he himself wrote of it later while imprisoned — a book you may find in your library today.

He says:

"Our village was situated on the north side of the Rock River, at the foot of its rapids. In front, a prairie extended to the bank of the Mississippi, and in the rear, a continued bluff gently ascending from the prairie. On the side of this bluff we had our cornfields, extending about two miles, running parallel with the Mississippi till they joined those of the Foxes. We had about 800 acres in cultivation, including what we had on the islands of the Rock River. The land about our village, uncultivated, was covered with blue grass, which made excellent pasture for our horses. Several fine springs broke out of the bluff nearby, from which we were supplied with good water. The rapids of the Rock River furnished us with an abundance of excellent fish, and the land never failed to produce good crops of corn, beans, pumpkins, and squash — our children never cried with hunger".

Here the Sacs for over a century had lived and buried their dead. About the year 1823, white men began moving into this locality. The Indian's fields were taken possession of, some lodges burned, their women and children driven away during the absence of the men on their yearly hunts. Because there were no courts nearby to settle the matter peaceably, Indians and white squatters proceeded to fight it out in their own way.

Fearing the danger of this conflict, Governor Edwards appealed to President Jackson, who thereupon issued an order that all Indians in the State of Illinois be removed across the Mississippi into what is now Iowa.

Colonel Davenport, seeing the distress of the Indians at being driven from their homes, offered to release the lands and buy others but to this President Jackson would not consent. So Blackhawk, returning from his hunting expedition in the spring of 1831, found his people removed and white men in possession of his village. Everyone advised him to leave peaceably but Blackhawk says:



"When I called to mind the scenes of my youth and those latter days — and reflected that the theatre on which these were acted had been so long the home of my fathers, who now slept on the hills around it, I could not bring my mind to consent to leave this country to the whites for any earthly consideration."

Determined to reclaim his lands or at least to find food for his people, Blackhawk, on April 16, 1859, gathered together about five hundred of his warriors and with their wives and children crossed the river again into Illinois. This was considered by the whites as an invasion and panic spread among them. Other Sacs and Foxes joined Blackhawk but the Pottawattomies remained neutral. All through the war Blackhawk was aided secretly by the Winnebagoes. Then began a scattering but bloody warfare extending through all the region of northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin. General Atkinson was placed in command of the white forces. Upon Governor Reynold's proclamation, sixteen hundred soldiers gathered at Beardstown and from there proceeded to the seat of the hostilities.

As the fighting grew more fierce, other men were called until finally 4,000 men under General Winfield Scott were ordered to proceed from the East by way of the Great Lakes. While they were on the way and after a pursuit entailing terrible hardships, Blackhawk and his warriors were brought to bay near Madison, Wisconsin, by General Atkinson and defeated with great loss to them. Afterward, at Bad Axe River, near Prairie DuChien, the remnant of the Indian forces were almost destroyed, their chief and only about 150 of his followers remaining.

All of this time General Scott and his men had been sailing down the Great Lakes toward Chicago, arriving July 10 in the hottest part of the summer. Blackhawk by that time had been defeated, "But a foe more deadly and appalling than the red man had appeared. The dreaded cholera was raging through the lake



region and many of the soldiers, like so many of Chicago's settlers, fell its victims. General Scott himself, with great bravery and skill, cared for the sick and encouraged the survivors. It was thought best to remove his men to higher ground, so the sickened army began its slow march inland." This march was called Scott's Army Trail.

#### SCOTT'S ARMY TRAIL

Authorities differ as to whether or not the soldiers marched through Boone County, and, if so, what route they took. The Army Trail is reported in so many sections that it is probable some of the reports are wrong or that there were different divisions of General Scott's Army which followed different routes. Mr. Jenner gives the following information: "Several years after the war had ended, General Scott came through Belvidere by coach, stopping overnight at the Towner Hotel. In the evening Mr. Jenner, who played the clarinet, Henry Green, who played the flute, Mr. Lowjoy who played the fiddle, and John Sheldon, the drummer, went up to serenade the general. General Scott came out and in talking about the war stated that that day, when he crossed the bridge in his coach he could see the place where he forded the river with his men. He stated that the banks were still broken down where they took the artillery across." There is a street in Fairview which is called Scott's Army Trail but no one is quite certain of the exact route. Scottish settlers in Caledonia also claim that the army marched through their town and that marks made by the wheels of the wagons and artillery were visible for a long time in that vicinity.

To sick men from the cholera-stricken district about Chicago the cool groves and fresh water of our area where the Pottawattomies were at peace must have been most gratifying. From letters and journals we know that a number of the soldiers in General Scott's army returned to their homes in the East and, gathering their wives and children, came to settle near this region.



To return to the fortunes of Blackhawk -- seeing his warriors, women and children massacred, he fled to the dells of Wisconsin, where he surrendered to the Winnebagoes and was delivered by them to the Indian agent at Prairie du Chien. From then on he was held in light imprisonment by the United States government for the remaining years of his life. It was during this time that he wrote his own story of the war. He dedicated the book to General Atkinson (White Beaver) who had pursued him through so many bloody miles of battle. Though often betrayed by officers under General Atkinson, he knew that the general himself was a man of honor. He says:

Sir:

The changes of fortune and the vicissitudes of war made you my conqueror. When my last resources were exhausted, my warriors worn down with long and toilsome marches, we yielded and I became your prisoner...

The kindness I have received from you while a prisoner of war assures me that you will vouch for the facts contained in my narrative... May the Great Spirit shed light on your path...that you may never experience the humility that the power of the American government has reduced me to, is the wish of him who, in his native forests was once as proud and bold as yourself.

Blackhawk



## CHAPTER 3.

### WHO CAME FIRST?

"The majority of the early settlers of Boone County came from New York state. Their ancestors, in the very early history of the country had emigrated, usually from England, and had located themselves upon the rocky hills of Massachusetts, Vermont, or New Hampshire, the rugged coast of Maine or among the Connecticut valleys. After the Revolutionary War the rising generation found the old farm homes too crowded and the fields too stony to raise good crops of grain. Therefore, they pushed westward into the fertile valleys of the Mohawk, the Hudson, the Genessee, and with the help of Dutch settlers whom they had found already there, made the great state of New York.

In the meantime Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware had filled up with settlers equally hard-working and intelligent and by 1836 came the crowding and longing to move westward. It was from these states, therefore, that Boone County looked for its first settlers. Most of them came by way of Chicago with no definite location in mind except that they intended to settle in Northern Illinois."

A map of Boone County according to the nationalities of its settlers would be somewhat as follows. At the top of the map are the townships of Manchester, LeRoy, and Boone where many Norwegian people came to take up land and make it into the fine farms for which they are noted. In Caledonia a group of Scottish folk drew together to make what is known as the Scottish settlement. Caledonia is an old, old name for Scotland.

In Boone Township, also, and particularly in Capron are a number of citizens of Canadian descent.



As you may see from the records, a large portion of the families in Spring were people born in England and others from there soon joined them. Bonus and Flora ~~were~~ to have drawn most of their settlers from New York and Pennsylvania---the eastern folk of whom ~~we~~ have told you, while Belvidere Township has many of German and Irish descent. Perhaps the two latter were attracted more by the city with its industries than by a life of farming.

Boone County also has had Greek, Italian, Colored, Mexican, and Jewish families who have been ~~our~~ good friends and neighbors for many years. Since people of so many different nationalities have lived in peace in Boone County for ~~more~~ than a century, why ~~can~~ it not be done anywhere in the world?

#### THE FIRST TO ARRIVE

If you ~~were~~ studying State history you would be told that the first settlements, ~~such as~~ Kaskaskia and Shawneetown, were made in southern Illinois along the Mississippi, Ohio, and Wabash rivers. Chicago at that time was but a small town. All ~~the~~ rest of northern Illinois ~~was~~ practically uninhabited ~~save~~ for numerous wild ~~game~~ and wandering tribes of Indians." Into ~~this~~ country ~~came our~~ first settler, Livingston Robbins, from Chatauqua, New York. He had received his first name from Dr. Livingstone, the famous African explorer who was said to have been his mother's brother. He and a partner took up a claim near where ~~the~~ State Street bridge ~~now~~ stands. Becoming lonely with ~~no~~ one but Indians as neighbors ~~the~~ partner decided to return to Chicago and did so. Mr. Robbins stood the increasing loneliness for a short time ~~then~~ returned to Chicago also. After he had been there a day ~~or~~ two, he met another young man whom he told about his claim on the Kishwaukee.

"If a man could go there and stick to it", said Mr. Robbins, "the place is ~~sure~~ to become a valuable location."

So the two agreed to return to the claim and after they had been there a short time, back ~~came~~ the first partner. When the three had lived together for some time an argument ~~arose~~ as to who should include a certain piece of timber in his claim.



The first partner and the newcomer took sides against Mr. Robbins. About this time other settlers came in and since the argument could not be settled peaceably, the three sold their land and separated. Later, Mr. Robbins' brother came from the East to join him and the two moved to Winnebago where their descendants still live.

#### FIRST PERMANENT SETTLERS

In June, 1835, John K. Towner, Cornelius Cline, and Erastus Nixon arrived at the location of what is now Belvidere. Mr. Towner, with his wife and eight children, had started in the early part of June from Steuben County, New York, to locate in Michigan but not finding a location that suited them, Mr. Towner left his wife and children with relatives near Detroit and came by boat to Chicago. At the hotel where he stopped, he met Mr. Nixon and Mr. Cline. At that time Chicago was "a sea of mud" so the three decided to push on to Rockford where they had heard there was a small settlement. They travelled on foot but upon reaching the Kishwaukee River they decided to stop there.

Mr. Towner immediately purchased a claim from the nearest government land office and arranged with Mr. Cline for the erection of a log house. Then, on foot and by lake he returned to Detroit where he gathered his family, bought several yokes of oxen and with these and a wagon he had brought from New York, he pushed back to the Kishwaukee.

Arriving about midnight the last of July, 1835, the party camped that night opposite what is now Belvidere Park and next morning moved into a small cabin on the river bank, thought to have been left there by Mr. Robbins and his partners. Their own home was not completed but Mr. Cline had built himself a cabin into which the Towners moved while Mr. Cline went East for his family and soon both were settled in their own homes.

Here is a true story about Mrs. Towner as it is told in another history.



When the Towners first came there ~~was~~ a band of Indians encamped where the fair grounds are ~~now~~ located ~~--- on~~ their way to Chicago before crossing ~~over~~ into Iowa. One day Mrs. Towner ~~was~~ alone in the cabin with her children. One of the Indians had become intoxicated and in that condition, entered ~~the~~ house and declared he had come to kill her. He jerked a knife from his belt that looked, ~~as~~ Mrs. Towner said, ~~as~~ long ~~as~~ a sword. By ~~some means~~ she drove him from the house and barred the door with a heavy wooden bench, determined to "hold the fort". The door ~~was~~ basswood puncheons (or split logs) and between them ~~were cracks~~ large enough to admit a man's hand.

Being driven out by a white-faced ~~Indian~~ enraged the Indian and he ~~made~~ a thrust through the cracks of the door with his knife. Finding he could do nothing that way he tried to gain entrance by climbing upon the roof and descending through the mud ~~and~~ brick chimney. But here again he ~~was~~ stopped by the brave woman within, who ripped open a straw bed and threw part of the straw ~~on~~ the smoldering hearth. This raised a smoke ~~that~~ drove the Indian to the ground. By this time, white ~~men~~ had been alarmed and ~~came~~ to her rescue. The Indian ~~was~~ led away. Later, other Pottawattomies told ~~the~~ white men that Mrs. Towner's ~~brave~~ and savage visitor ~~was~~ a "bad Indian", one who did not belong to their band but ~~had~~ "fastened himself to them".

You will ~~meet~~ Mrs. Towner again in this history.

Practically all of the earliest settlers of Boone County ~~came~~ by way of Chicago. While ~~some~~ of the young ~~men~~ without families or household goods ~~were~~ able to walk, those who brought their families with them found it necessary to come either by ox team ~~or~~ with horses. The first few miles west of Chicago was low and swampy ground and very hard going ~~so~~ that sometimes six ~~or~~ eight yokes of ~~men~~ were required to draw the wagons ~~across~~. At such times several travellers would unite and, by hitching their teams together, would pull the wagons through, ~~one~~ by ~~one~~.



Mr. E. C. Lawrence, who arrived in 1837, states that there were just sixteen houses between Chicago and Belvidere, Belvidere included. The journey took five days. Mr. Thurston, also arriving the same year said: "We stopped the first night at the Buckthorn Tavern about 18 miles west of Chicago. The second night we stopped at Smith's Tavern (hotel) and after striking Garden Prairie we found a trail blazed through the timber which led us to the ford of the Kishwaukee". This would be near where Coleman's bridge now stands. This was also the ford used by the Pottawattomies — their trail from Chicago to Galena.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Trace the general route of some of our ancestors from England to Boone County as told in this chapter.
2. Was June a good month in which to start out to find a new home?
3. What were some ways in which the early settlers helped one another?
4. Mr. Lawrence stated that in 1837 there were sixteen houses between Chicago and Belvidere. How many do you think there are now?



## CHAPTER 4

### SCATTERED SETTLEMENTS DR. WHITNEY AND MR. DOTY

"In the early part of August, 1835, two months after the arrival of Mr. Towner, Mr. Cline, and Erastus Nixon, ~~came~~ two travellers, Simon F. Doty and Dr. Daniel Whitney. They stopped for a short time with the Towners. Simon P. Doty ~~was~~ born in Dutchess County, New York, and before coming to Belvidere, had been a sailor.

Dr. Whitney was one of the most able citizens of the early days in Belvidere. He was a man of great energy, a ready talker, an able, though rather flowery speaker, and a very enthusiastic Whig. His stature was tall, his complexion dark, his hair coal black. His first wife, whom he married ~~several~~ years before in New York, died only one month after reaching Belvidere. In December 1836, he was married to Sarah Caswell — the first wedding solemnized in what was to be Boone County.

"A short time after their arrival, Mr. Doty built a small cabin for himself on the bank of the river. He tells, as a joke, how a "grand Whig rally" was held there one night. The next day Dr. Whitney, also as a joke, wrote up the meeting for a Chicago paper, describing it as "a large and enthusiastic meeting held at the Belvidere Hotel. Mr. Doty was the large and Dr. Whitney the enthusiastic part". Some time later, two Chicago travelers, looking for a night's lodging, remembered the article and made their way to what they thought was the Belvidere Hotel. They found Mr. Doty in his cabin with nothing on his menu but hulled corn, but he did his best to entertain his guests and started them on their journey next morning fairly well satisfied and filled with nutritious hulled corn".

Inspired by this occurrence, Dr. Whitney states that he "bought some logs from Messers. Payne and Wheeler who resided on the Fox River, had them



hauled to a good location (what is now the southwest corner of State Street and Lincoln Avenue), made into a double house, named it the "Belvidere Hotel" and installed Mr. Doty as proprietor. In this way, Mr. Doty started in the hotel business. Since he was much interested in political life, the Belvidere Hotel became a place where many important public meetings were held. Later he built a hotel of his own, "The Doty House" on the South bank of the river.

#### THE LAWRENCES

Note: The coming of the Lawrence family was almost like the travels of Abraham in Bible times. This is a part of the story as told in Judge Carpenter's History.

"Among the early settlers of Bonus were the Lawrences. They came from Cuba, Alleghany County, New York. Luther W. and Daniel, two of the brothers, arrived in September, 1836. They had walked most of the way from Toledo, Ohio. They put up at Timothy Caswell's Tavern, near what is now the Coleman Bridge. At that time the grass along the Piscasaw was so high that, for a joke, some men tied the tops together over the backs of the oxen just to show how tall it was."

"The Lawrences selected their land in the southwest portion of Bonus, one quarter section each for themselves and one for their father --- Daniel on the east, Luther on the west, and the father between. The two young men then went back to New York state."

"The following spring (1837) John, the father, returned with Daniel and a younger son, John Jr., a lad of fifteen, leaving Luther at home in New York. They started to improve the land and built one large cabin on the center claim. That was the year of the seventeen-year-locusts and the insects were very thick. In July Daniel sold his claim and returned alone to New York.

"After John, Sr. had built the house he left his young son, John, Jr. in it in care of a family (the Stewarts) and travelled back once more to New York. In the same fall he and his son Luther fitted up one large wagon and brought the family of twelve persons to Boone County, reaching the claim "long after dark" on the night of October 27.



"The twelve who came were Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, their three daughters, Sarah Ann, Uretta, and Mary Lucinda; another son, Edwin, 11 years old; Luther, his wife and four children.

"That was a very wet season and the rivers and sloughs all overflowed. When the Lawrences came in the fall, the water had carried off the bridge across the Kishwaukee and was all over the flats. They borrowed a boat from Benjamin Sweet and loaded the goods from the wagons, standing in the water, onto the boat. Then they led the horses across, also taking several loads. Then the women and children got in the one wagon and were taken across while the men waded. Mr. Stewart had a good supper for them and they soon felt in good cheer. The little cabin was quite crowded that night, there being sixteen people in all.

#### MR. AVERY AND THE PORTERS

Long afterward Mr. Avery wrote, in a letter to his friend, Mr. Sackett:

"My father bought a claim from Loudy Stevenson for, I believe, \$250. That summer we bought enough poplar trees for a set of house logs and had them hewed both sides, and in September, had a "raising". When the frame was nearly up, a covered wagon, drawn by a couple of black horses and containing a number of small children with their parents and a niece of Mr. Thomas W. Porter came by and while it stopped, its occupants talked to the men at work on the house. These men persuaded Mr. Porter to turn around and drive back to Loudy Stevenson's and stay all night. The next day James Otis persuaded Porter to go over the river and buy his claim. There was no home on the land, so Mr. Porter made arrangements to stay with Uncle Loudy until they could erect a small house. They fared pretty hard that winter, living mostly on turnips, potatoes and salt".

Note: Members of the Porter family later became some of the most extensive land owners of the county. Of his own arrival in Boone County from Auburn, Pennsylvania in 1838, Mr. Avery tells a sad story.



"Coming from Marengo to Ashville, the first sign of a building was a body without a roof. I think it was one that David Barron moved into later. There was a small field, fenced. We brought a nice bull-dog with us from Pennsylvania. We stopped at a tavern in Marengo to feed our three horses, but when we hitched up, the dog must have been asleep and we did not miss him until we got to this field. Father started back on foot to find the dog. He did not have far to go because he met the dog coming. It was a hot day and the dog was about used up, so father put him over the fence in the shade. The next day father went back and found him dead."

MRS. BOWEN'S "REMEMBRANCES"

This story comes from Mrs. H.L. Bowen of Flora Township:

"In 1838, a company of seven started from their homes in Connecticut. The party consisted of Daniel Bliss, his wife and two children, Edmund and Maryette; Wait Rice and wife, my father and mother and Candace Case, who subsequently married Robert Norton, parents of E.C. Norton of Belvidere. They came by way of the Erie Canal, around the chain of lakes from Buffalo to what is now the Garden City of Chicago but was then:

"A barren waste of swampy land,  
Flat as a pancake, rich as grease,  
Where gnats were full as big toads  
And mosquitoes quite as large as geese."

Their worldly possessions were packed in huge chests; feather beds, patch work quilts, broad-cloth suits and velvet vests for the men, silk dresses for the women; tables, wooden clocks, dishes, glassware, tallow candles, brass candle sticks and snuffers, andirons, groceries, and even large brass and iron kettles for laundry use were brought to the new country. Three men and three spans of horses were hired to convey them to the end of their journey; the women and children riding on the large loads.

"All streams had to be forded and the swamps were bottomless. They were almost a week on their way from Chicago, for the teamsters lost the trail and wandered over the prairie and through sloughs.



The women were tired, cross, and homesick and went on repining but in due time reached their destination, their brother's log cabin. It was 14 feet square, with a fireplace built of sticks of wood daubed with mud at one end of the room; a puncheon floor, one small window with oiled paper for glass, and a door of slabs with a latch-string.

"No screens had been devised to keep flies and mosquitoes out, but there was a "smudge" near the door — a dense, suffocating smoke to keep the pests away.

"Their arrival was unexpected, the hosts were not prepared to receive company. A ~~saucer~~ of grease with a rag for a wick was all the light they had. The culinary department consisted of some corn meal that had been pounded in a mortar and then ground in a coffee mill. The nearest grist mill was at Beloit. Some one was dispatched in haste to the nearest neighbor for supplies — potatoes, salt pork and some wheat flour was obtained.

"No gas stoves then; the baking was done in a tin oven called a "baker" with a cover, buried in the coals. Each fireplace had a crane with iron ~~ladder~~ for supporting the kettles which hung over the fire.

"Imagine seventeen people in that 14 foot room on a hot night in July, as there were the family of five (the Deans) two boarders, the three teamsters and seven emigrants. It was kitchen, dining room and sleeping room, but true hospitality prevailed, there was always room for one more at the table and any number of lodgers could be accommodated as long as there was an inch of space on the floor."



## THE LAND RUSH

At first a county's history is simple — there is only the wilderness with a few men fortunate enough to see it in all its freshness. With only a few families here and there, it is easy to follow their fortunes.

But by 1845, there was a great rush of travelers. Men, women, whole caravans were coming from all directions though mostly from the East — on foot, on horseback, in wagons from Ohio or by way of the Great Lakes. It would be fascinating to tell the history of each family — why they left their homes, what happened on the way, and what caused them to choose, out of thousands of miles of prairie, this small spot in which we now live. But in such a brief book it would be impossible. For now this history too must move on at a faster pace.

## STAKING OUT CLAIMS

Most early settlers needed money. One way of earning a living was by taking up government land at \$1.25 an acre (the price set by law) and selling it later for whatever it would bring. When rightly done this was considered perfectly fair.

"According to early travelers, wherever one stopped he was at once besieged by an eager crowd wishing to sell him land. Many claimed land which really did not belong to them. A claim might be made by plowing a furrow of ground around the land desired. Often when a man had decided upon a piece which pleased him he was told that it had been claimed already by someone else. These difficulties caused much trouble and sometimes tragedies. No serious land fights are recorded in our county but there were probably many hot arguments."

To make it more difficult, a journey must be made to register the claim at the nearest government land office, either at Dixon, Galena or Chicago.



## BELVIDERE COMPANY

"Under an old act of Congress, any person who had actually lived on and cultivated a piece of land had first chance to buy when it was put up for sale. In order to protect themselves against undesirable persons or speculators, the real settlers in a community usually formed what was known as a "company", to buy the land, to divide it among themselves and to stand by each other in holding it. So the "Belvidere Company" was formed.

"Some of those who formed it were J.C. Goodenough, Nathaniel and Pearson Crosby, Dr. Whitney, Ebenezer Peck, John S. King, Seth and Jacob Whitman. These names and many others, you may find on old land records at the County Building. In his history, Judge Carpenter says: "Some of the writing in the early records before the (Civil) war — would try the patience of a saint — to say nothing about a lawyer. Most of the records, however, were very well kept from the start."

## SCHOOL SECTIONS

"As can be imagined, it was a very difficult task to make the surveys in order to divide off the land into sections, quarter sections and 80 acre tracts." There were hills and valleys to consider, streams wound in every direction with no regard for straight lines and claims overlapped from one township to another. But of one thing they were sure. Section 16 of each township was reserved by law for the "School Section". Land in this section could be bought only through the School Commissioners. Whatever ground necessary was reserved for the school building, then the rest surveyed into small lots, sold and the money used for school purposes in that township.

Meanwhile, What Was Happening in Other Parts of the County?

Bonus "This township was taken up from the government mostly between 1840-1850. Garden Prairie is a pleasant town situated on both sides of the state road in section 36. The village was surveyed by Yates V. Beebe on December 14, '54, for David Sackett, the owner of the village. Mr. Sackett also made an addition to the village in '65."



You have already met some of the settlers of Bonus --- the Lawrences, Mr. Avery, Uncle Loudy Stevenson, Thomas Porter, and you will hear more of the Ames Hotel. "The first school in Bonus was taught by Mrs. Lydia Lawrence under the shade of a large white oak tree."

Flora This township was first called "Fairfield", then "Benton". The land in Flora was taken up from the government mostly between 1839 --- 45. The Lucas family was one of the earliest. Other early settlers were Frank King, Arthur and Abel Blood, and Daniel Bliss. Other familiar names are Penwell, Russell, Cunningham, Dean, and Avery.

Spring The first citizen mentioned here ~~name~~ to be John Handy, in 1835. You will meet him again in this history. The township of Spring also had other names. It ~~was~~ first called "Ohio Precinct" and later, "Concord".

In the early part of 1835, Alfred Shattuck, his wife and two ~~sons~~ (Harlyn, aged 20 years and F.H., about 12) left Painesville, Ohio, to find a ~~new~~ home in Illinois. They stopped near Chicago but in the latter part of September Alfred Shattuck and his son Harlyn ~~went~~ out to ~~the~~ Kishwaukee country to select claims, which they made in the grove which now bears their name. In the spring they were joined by the Blatchfords, the Curtis brothers and John Baxter. McVeigh and Bruce ~~came~~ soon after ~~and~~ Dr. Orris Crosby."

This picture is given of Dr. Crosby: "After the conclusion of the presidential campaign in 1840, both Whigs and Democrats gave public balls at Rockford. The VanBuren ball was held at the Rockford House, March 3, 1841. Dr. Orris Crosby, the oldest Democrat there, with a handsome young partner, opened the Democratic ball with a Virginia Reel. Mr. Thurston describes him as being spare in build, six feet or ~~more~~ in height and clad in a blue broad-cloth, swallow tail coat with brass buttons in the style of the 1820's, an immense rolling collar, trousers four inches shorter than now worn, red stockings, and calf-skin pumps."



Boone Boone Township seems not to have been actively settled until 1839-40. The town of Capron was named for a Colonel Capron, who, though he lived in an adjoining county, "had considerable to do with putting the railroad through." Names so well known in Boone Township are the Stensons, Livingstones, Lindermans, Ridges, and Kelloggs. Mr. Dean was the first school teacher in Boone, though his school was located just over the line in Caledonia. Poplar Grove was laid out in 1859 by Evi Shearman and was called "Shearmantown". Part of it is in Caledonia and part in Boone. Mr. D.C. Cowan was a popular postmaster and well-known citizen of Poplar Grove."

Caledonia A rather sad story is connected with the earliest purchase of land in Caledonia. A claim of 5,000 acres in this county and more in adjoining counties was entered in '39 by a Mr. William Taylor "in behalf of a number of residents of Aberdeen, Scotland" who wished to come here to live. By a written agreement with these people, Mr. Taylor was to come to America to buy the land under his own name. But on the journey he was drowned in the Mississippi River near St. Louis from the steamer "War Eagle". This necessitated the title of the land to be transferred to Mr. Alexander Ferguson, from whom it came down to a great number of actual settlers. This became the Scotch settlement of which we are so proud, and which was named Caledonia --- an ancient name for Scotland.

Its first real settlers were Michael Taplin, Abijah Story, James and Thomas Ramsey, Nancy Stevens, Enoch Garland, Dr. Calvin Case. Philemon DeGroff, Benjamin Guile, Robert Morgan, Isaac Sewell, Steven Covey, John and George Picken, and Charles Whiting.

Manchester "Among those who entered land claims in Manchester in 1839 and 1840 were David Campbell, Lars Baarson, Timan Tolverson, Alvin Cady, Benjamin F. Riddle, Harry Smith, William Linderman, James Bennett, Ariel Wadsworth, Samuel Pye, David Noggle, Calvin M. Stowell, Thomas Sanders, Walter Warren, and William Crosby.



LeRoy "In the early days this township was known as Lambertson, the first settlement being made by James B. and Jeremiah Lambert in the fall of 1863. John Langdon also settled on "Long Prairie" in the same year and the Chamberlain brothers on "Round Prairie" at an early date.

Blaine was formerly called "Union Corners". Among the settlers from '42-50 were Robert B. Hurd and Levi Adkins, Jr. "who (later) joined in taking the contract for (the building of) our first court house."

Belvidere "One of the best pieces of land in Belvidere township was Highland (where the hospital now stands) because of its fine, high location. Another very desirable spot was Turner's Hill, bought by Mr. Turner — now with St. Joseph's Hospital near it. How the city of Belvidere ~~was~~ laid out has been told most interestingly in Judge Carpenter's history in the library.

The northwest part of Belvidere Township is quite hilly and picturesque. In section 5 is the Stephenson stone quarry. In an early day this was owned by Dr. Stone and beside the quarry there was a mill and lime kiln. Other names and places will become familiar to you as the story goes on.



## CHAPTER 6

### BOONE COUNTY IS CREATED AND NAMED

The page following may be read or not as you choose. Since there was no Boone County at the time about which it is written, it is not strictly a part of our history. But whoever reads it will, thereafter, have more love and sympathy for "Little Boone", knowing what a hard time this small piece of land had, being pushed about until it finally emerged as a real county with a name of its own.

The territory now forming our county was first included in an organized county in 1801 when it was a part of St. Clair in Indiana Territory. In 1813 the northern part of Illinois was named Madison County. In 1814 Madison County was divided by a line running north and south and our part of Edwards County was named Crawford and in 1819 Crawford was called Clark County.

In 1821 that part of the state north of the Illinois and Kankakee rivers was formed into Pike County. In 1823 the limits of Pike County were greatly reduced and what is now Blaine was "attached to Fulton County for legal purposes but did not form the part of any county". In 1825 all the Northeast part of the state, including Boone, was formed into Putnam County. In 1831 this territory again became attached to another county for legal purposes, that county being LaSalle. On January 16, 1836, Winnebago County was formed, including all of what is now Boone, Winnebago, and part of Stephenson.

The law creating Winnebago required that, in order to create another county under it, a petition must be sent to the General Assembly of the state "and the proposed county must have in it no less than 350 white people".

Here our own county history begins.



It is not told in the history which we are studying who first suggested a separate county, nor why we wished to be separated from Winnebago. But on July 15, 1836, such a petition was made out by Dr. Daniel Whitney and presented to Judge Thomas H. Ford. Judge Ford accepted the petition and it was sent to the General Assembly of the State of Illinois where, on May 4, 1837, it was granted in these words:

"Be it enacted by the people of Illinois, that all that tract of land--- here follows a long list of boundaries, nearly as they are today---" shall be called Boone County in honor of Colonel Daniel Boone of Kentucky".

#### "THE MILE STRIP"

As Boone County was first planned, all of those sections forming a strip one mile in width, running up the western edge of the present county were a part of Winnebago. They remained so for six years, then an act was passed providing that "the said mile strip should thereafter form a part of Boone County, providing that a majority of the voters residing in the said strip were in favor of such annexation."

On the fourth Monday of May, 1843, a meeting to vote upon it was held in the house of Samuel Keith of Newburgh. Great excitement was caused over the question. Some of the people living in the mile strip wished it to remain a part of Winnebago --- others wished it annexed to Boone. When the vote was taken, it was found that 51 votes were for annexation and 44 against it. Thus the mile strip was added and Boone County was complete!

#### CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTIONS

Boone County came into the state in time to have a voice in the making of the state constitution. Delegates who did so were Daniel H. Whitney in 1847, Luther Lawrence in 1862, and Jesse Hildrup in 1870.



QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER 6 (For older pupils)

1. Under how many names was our territory known from 1801 to 1837?
2. What is meant by the words "attached to another county for legal purposes"?
3. Some of the duties of county offices and officials are:  
to record land claims and surveys; to record marriages  
and wills; to care for taxation, elections, insane cases,  
care of the poor, etc.

How many other duties of county organizations can you give?

Which was in existence first--- Boone County or the city of Belvidere?

Partial answers to Question 3.

Recording of births and deaths, bounties, hunting licenses,  
holding court.

## CHAPTER 7

### OFFICERS ARE CHOSEN AND THE WORK BEGINS

As soon as Boone County had been separated from Winnebago, an election was held for county officers. Mr. Simon P. Doty was elected sheriff, John Handy from Spring Township was chosen coroner; Seth S. Whitman, recorder. Milton S. Mason, Cornelius Cline and John Q.A. Rollins were elected County Commissioners and S.P. Hyde, County Surveyor.

The first Commissioner's court consisted of the three commissioners named above, with Dr. Daniel Whitney as clerk of the court to keep its records.

At a meeting May 3, 1837, the commissioners administered the oath of office to each other. They then divided the county into two precincts. All of the southern half was called Belvidere and the northern half, Lambertsburg for James and Jeremiah Lambert of LeRoy. Mr. John Towner was appointed Treasurer, and Road Commissioners were chosen.

One of the first questions to come up for settlement concerned trouble caused by persons cutting timber on the school sections. Since such timber was the property of the schools "the School Commissioner was authorized to prosecute them".

In September tavern rates were fixed (as told in Chapter 9). Also, Dr. Whitney was allowed \$8 for "books purchased for the recorder and for stationary". On September 4, the state of the treasury was reported as follows:

Collected from fines and licenses-----	\$40.00
Liabilities-----	41.00

To its embarrassment the new county found itself \$1.84 in debt!

Until a court house could be built the Belvidere Commissioners held their meetings in the Doty Hotel while commissioners from Lambertsburg met in the home of Mr. John Wright. On the last day of October, 1837, the location of a court house was decided upon. Two commissioners, appointed for that



purpose, located it "by driving a stake into the ground where they thought it should be---and where it still remains". The expenses of surveying, etc., amounted to \$40 and, since the treasury was a little more than empty, Mr. Cephas Gardiner loaned the county this amount.

At ~~the~~ long meeting the court was given a recess "until candle-lighting time" ~~when it was~~ to "re-convene".

The next most important business seems to have been the laying out of roads and, at this, the county must have worked furiously according to the records of roads petitioned for or completed in the late months of 1837 and in 1838. Judge Carpenter writes: "While there may have been a few citizens too old or too young to "work the roads", or a few who were skipped, these lists (of workers) represent very fairly the citizens of 1837." Roads were especially called for in the northern part of the county where much of the land was untraveled wilderness.

In the June term of court, 1838, it was ordered that the "north room of Mr. Doty's tavern should be used for a county jail until otherwise ordered".

Among expenses of the Court is listed:

One bunch of quills for pens ---37 $\frac{1}{2}$  cents.

In the court term of December, 1838, a somewhat dramatic incident occurred. Dr. Whitney, having been appointed clerk of the court, had built himself a tiny building 12 feet square, just behind where the Presbyterian Church now stands, to be used as an office. He also had a deputy---Mr. Joseph Briggs. At that time there was a law saying that a clerk of the court must maintain his office no more than a quarter of a mile from the place of holding court, and Dr. Whitney's office was slightly more than that. Someone discovered the fact and, at a meeting of the court when Dr. Whitney was not present, his office was declared vacant and Mr. James Loop elected to fill his place.

Mr. Briggs, however, having been left in charge of the office, "did contemptuously take up the record and refused to deliver it to Mr. Loop, together with other papers of the county and took them away with him. The

commissioners declared Mr. Briggs guilty of contempt of court and ordered that he pay a fine of \$25. The following day, Mr. Briggs' temper having cooled, he confessed that he had been too hasty in his action. The fine he was to pay was cut in half and paid and the incident closed". These same books and papers are still among the county records.

In March, 1839, Hiram Waterman was appointed commissioner to see to the building of the court house and it was ordered that it should be 30 feet wide and 40 feet long. "Posts 25 feet high with entry for stairs on each side of the front door. Hall 5 feet wide through lower story and two rooms on either side of hall. Upper room, to be arched overhead, for a court room. Mr. Levi Adkins joined with Robert Hurd (both of LeRoy) in taking the contract for the first court house.

By April, Mr. Doty had completed a small jail on the county property (or court house square) and the keys were delivered to the new sheriff who was authorized to "procure a set of shackles for hands and feet and a ring, belt and chain".

#### FIRST CIRCUIT COURT

The first term of the Circuit Court in our county was in April, 1839, "In the Baptist house of worship in Belvidere". Since there was, as yet, no court house, the Baptist congregation offered their church — a rather low, one-story structure, somewhat along the lines of New England houses. It stood on the southeast corner of Van Buren and Hurlbut Avenue. Later it was moved across the street and used as a church by the Universalists. In 1861 it was next moved to West Lincoln Avenue — opposite what is now the Clinic — and rented as a paint shop. In 1865, it was moved again to West Hurlbut Avenue where it is now used as a residence. With all of these changes it must certainly have a record as one of the most traveled court houses in the country.

By June, 1839, the county was beginning to be divided into townships. Also, Jacob Fisk was allowed \$1 for "fixing the Meeting House" (or Court House).



September, 1839 --- A contract was made with Wm. B. Page for bricks for the Court House, the bricks to be made on Dr. Stone's farm (now Stephenson's stone quarry).

December, 1839 --- Work on Court House still being planned. The bridge across the Kishwaukee having been carried away by freshets, Mr. Doty was authorized "to run a ferry across the river at Belvidere. He was to give free passage to all residents and their teams, and be paid \$50 a year". The ferry rates for other travellers were set as follows:

Vehicle drawn by two horses or more	- 25 cents
Vehicle with one horse	- 18 3/4 cents
Man on horseback	- 12-1/2 cents
Person on foot	- 6-1/4 cents
Cattle per head	- 3 cents
Hogs and sheep	- 1 cent

June, 1840 --- Rosiel D. Campbell appointed to take census for that year.

The county contracted with John Bruce for stone for foundations of the court house. "The jail, built by Mr. Doty and standing upon the grounds now selected for the court house, was ordered removed to another site."

December, 1840 --- "F.W. Crosby was allowed to build a dam" --- about where the present dam is situated. Plans still going forward for the building of the Court House --- more roads being built.

In the back of a record book appears a list of certificates for wolf scalps.

John Lawrence	1 wolf scalp
Bradford Cunningham	5 wolves
Heaton	2 wolves
Alfred Strong	5 wolves
Cyrus Avery	8 prairie wolves
John Barrett	17 prairie wolves

These were some of the problems, large and small, which had to be dealt with in a new land, and from the accuracy of the records and the care with which they built, we know that the founders of our county did their work well.

Today others --- city and county officials, business men and women, and the many organizations which now have the welfare of the county in their hands --- are giving long hours of time which they might like to spend otherwise, for our own comfort and safety. Their work also will be remembered gratefully when some later history is written.

## COURT HOUSE HILL ON THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Every boy and girl who ever attended Lincoln School in Belvidere knows well the Court House hill, the flag pole and the grave of Big Thunder at its foot. This is a description of the hill from "Peck's Gazetteer" of Illinois — a paper printed in 1837.

"The only town in the county is Belvidere, a small settlement on the stage road from Chicago to Galena. It is in the western part of the county, on Squaw Prairie, and has a delightful appearance. Near the town is a mound 50 rods long and about 30 rods wide, elevated 70 feet above the bottom land of the river. On the top of this mound is the cemetery of an Indian called Big Thunder who died about the time of the Sauk War."

Perhaps the following pages will show you the "Mound" as it appeared to those first curious travelers who came through soon after the close of the BlackHawk War.

"Mr. Devillo Hale stated that he came to Belvidere in 1836 and there were only three public buildings here at that time; Doty's Tavern, Mr. Neely's store and the Towner Tavern. Mr. Hale stated that the palisade about Big Thunder's grave was made of split trees about six or eight inches in diameter, driven into the ground; that it was about six feet high with on top, a circular shape and about six feet in diameter. Inside was a chair made of split ash splinters, with a back. In the chair wrapped in a blanket, was Big Thunder, looking something like an Egyptian mummy. He was facing Squaw Prairie (south) and a hole was cut in the palisade on a level with his head, so that he might see when his tribe had a great battle, which was expected to take place — at which time Big Thunder would come to life and take command again. Mr. Hale stated that the flag pole is now on the exact spot where Big Thunder sat. He said that the old chief had tobacco in his lap and a bow and arrows, a



scalping knife and other weapons nearby --- all placed there by friends for his spirit to use during the seven years which must elapse before it entered the Happy Hunting Grounds."

"As to who Big Thunder was, or what he did in his life time, no one seems to know. --- The fact that most of the Indians here were Pottowattomies would indicate that he belonged to that tribe ---."

#### THE PUBLIC SQUARE

We have great cause to be thankful that the planners of our county seat and its surroundings were men of generous ideas. They chose for it the highest spot in the landscape, leaving plenty of room on all sides. Since there was no money in the treasury to buy it, the land for the county seat was donated by the Belvidere Company. As Belvidere was planned at that time there was no Main Street and all the ground from what is now Van Buren to Webster and from Perry to Menominee was to have been the "Public Square" at the center of the city. The coming of the railroad, however, changed all these plans and drew the business part of the city in that direction.

The building of the first real court house has been told in Chapter 7. In 1854, feeling the need of a more dignified building for their "Permanent Seat of Justice", the people of Boone began the erection of the Court House as it stands today. Allen C. Fuller, then a young lawyer, and Leonard Beebe were the building committee for the County Board and were given a vote of thanks for their "faithful work".

In July a committee to erect a fence around the Public Square was appointed --- "either posts and boards, four boards high, or posts and rails." In 1878, Main Street was extended across the Square. A galvanized iron fence was placed on the west side and another on the east, with turn-stiles in front of the buildings." All of these precautions were to keep the cows from roaming about the county grounds. In 1879 "a fire-proof building for the safe-keeping of all county records was built" --- our present Record Building.

During the year 1882, one hundred and fifty trees were set out on the county grounds.

A sheriff's residence and jail was completed by 1890.

A tall stand-pipe (or water tower) once stood on the Public Square opposite the Court House but, as Judge Carpenter says, "as it began to lean, the city, not wishing to become another Pisa, had it pulled down". In its place now stands the very beautiful Soldier's Monument — a gift from the brothers Mark and John Ramsey — with the beautifully simple inscription:

TO THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS OF BOONE COUNTY

A large boulder stands at the western entrance of the park in memory of men lost in the sinking of the battleship Maine in Havana Harbor, February 15, 1898. The plate on it is cast from metal taken from the Maine.

For many years the open square was known only as the city park but in 1940 a request was made by the Boone County Historical Society for a name to distinguish it from Belvidere Park. Judge Carpenter supplied the name "Big Thunder".

It was here, in the summer of 1917 that Company M was billeted while waiting to leave for Texas and thence to France in the First World War. Pup tents were set up and volunteers gathered from all parts of the county. People living near went to sleep to the sound of "Taps" and awoke to "Reveille" in the morning. Having completed their company the men entrained on the morning of September 13, under the command of Captain Roy Brown, who was later killed in action. Company M remained together through the duration of the war, returning in the spring of 1918. This, however, belongs to a later history.

For many winters, one generation after another of Belvidere boys and girls have taken over the Court House hill for sliding purposes whenever the snow was packed just right. Before traffic made it too hazardous, sleds and toboggans, skillfully handled, could be made to coast as far as the Baptist Church. Altogether, our Court House hill is a useful and beautiful place.



### OLD THUNDER

Friendly spirit on the Hill  
Watch above our prairie still;  
Guard the river and the town,  
Children passing up and down.

Though your bones have turned to dust,  
Though your weapons all are rust,  
Still we see you, patient there,  
Sitting in your ashen chair.

## CHAPTER 9

### TRAVEL THE STAGE EARLY POST OFFICES

In its earliest days only two roads ~~ran~~ through Belvidere. What is now State Street was then the State Road and, crossing it was the County Road, known now as Lincoln Avenue.

Since at that time there was ~~no~~ "south side", the stage coach and most travelers came in on the north side of the Kishwaukee ~~on~~ the easterly side of the town, around the Bend where Dr. Kaskee's house now stands, down ~~the~~ road that followed the river — now East Lincoln Avenue, and stopped at the "American House" (or hotel). Here there ~~was~~ often a delay of half ~~an~~ hour or more while mail ~~was~~ changed and the horses rested and fed.

"From here Big Thunder's fence ~~on~~ the Mound with its bleached, white sides, was very noticeable ~~as~~ practically ~~no~~ houses ~~came~~ between, and the passengers often strolled up there to visit this curiosity. One by one, they carried the bones away for souvenirs".

When all was ready and the passengers had embarked once more, the stage went out by what ~~is~~ now West Lincoln Avenue, turned south to cross the river at Cline's ford (a shallow place between the Park ~~and~~ the Fair Grounds) then west again ~~on~~ the River Road on its way to Newburgh and Rockford. At that time Newburgh had three stores and Belvidere only two.

### HOTELS AND TAVERNS

Taverns and hotels seem to have been the most important part of the early towns. Since people traveled only by foot or with horses it was necessary to make more frequent stops for rest, food, and shelter. All of these Belvidere seemed able and anxious to supply. Judge Carpenter says: "Margaret Fuller, the celebrated writer, visited the Kishwaukee and Rock River valleys in 1843, and added, by her genius, much interest to the places at which she stopped. Miss Fuller belonged to the gifted Concord Circle, of which Hawthorne and Emerson were a part.

(at)



She afterwards married Count D'Ossili and was drowned in a ship in sight of land while returning from Italy to her native country. Miss Fuller took a trip from Chicago to Oregon in 1843 and in a description of her journey, mentions Belvidere, where she found "a very good hotel". This was probably the American House, kept by one of the twelve Truesdell brothers, and which, at that time was considered one of the best hotels between Chicago and Galena.

Another was the "Belvidere Hotel" which occupied all of the block from where the Apollo theatre now stands to Lincoln Avenue corner. It is described as follows:

"--- a one-story kitchen, then a larger portion containing a dining room with sleeping apartments upstairs, then a one-story bar room, then a store room which came out on the corner. This building was painted. It was not a log cabin but one of, if not the first, frame buildings in the county."

Note: You may remember this as the hotel which Dr. Whitney built for his friend, Mr. Doty.

A little farther up the North State Road, Mr. John K. Towner was building the Towner Hotel (where the Homestead now stands) which, also, was soon to become a very popular stopping place.

Leaving Belvidere on the east, the County Road angled to meet the State Road at what is now Garden Prairie. Here was a double log house, the Ames Hotel or tavern, which seems to have been a very hospitable place and here, on June 13, 1838, the government decided to establish a post office on the stage line from Chicago to Galena and named it "Amesville" in honor of the first postmaster, Wm. Ames. Mr. Ames died in 1840 and 1836 the name of the office was changed to Garden Prairie.

Newburgh also, had a very good two-story tavern.

Tavern rates were set by the county commissioners and in 1838 were as follows:

Per Meal	37-1/2 cents
Night's lodging	12-1/2 cents
Oats per peck	25 cents
Span of horses to hay over night	37-1/2 cents
Good brandy and wine	12-1/2 cents
Poor brandy and wine	6-1/4 cents
Meals for Stage Passengers	50 cents

## HOW A GENERAL TRAVELED

This story has been mentioned before in Chapter 2 but it is more interesting in Mr. Jenners' own words.

"A little above Main Street bridge used to be a ford that we drove across with teams. Scott's army crossed near there. Scott told me so himself in the fall of '38. He came through in a coach. He had a valet to help him dress, and he had a lame arm. He also brought a coachman with him and two horses. Stopped at Towner's overnight, driving in a little before sundown. When we found out who it was we determined to serenade him. There was a fiddler here by the name of Lovejoy, Henry Green played the flute, John Sheldon the tenor drum and I played a clarionet. We went up there and after being introduced to the general we got to talking. He said:

"When I crossed your bridge down there I saw where we forded across."

I said, "Where was it?"

He said, "I saw where the bank was broken down a few rods above the bridge. That's where we broke it down to take our artillery across."

Scott was 6 feet 2 inches tall; weighed 250 to 275 pounds. His picture will give a good idea of how he looked. He was inclined to be a little aristocratic but, after all, he could speak to a common fellow."

## EARLY POSTAL SERVICE

Belvidere's first postmaster was Seth S. Whitman. His home stood on the corner of what are now East Lincoln Avenue and Fairview Street. "The post office boxes were the holes between the rafters of his house, the ceiling not being so high but that it could be reached easily. At that time postage was 25 cents for a letter. In the very early days each piece of paper constituted a letter and postage had to be paid on each piece at the legal rate. Often when two or more documents were prepared by out-side lawyers and sent here by mail, they would make them one long sheet, then cut them apart — all except one small margin. Thereby two or three documents could be mailed for the price of one. Long love letters were sent in the same way.



After a short time the post office was moved to Doty's dining room where the letters were kept in a little cupboard about 3 feet square. Mrs. Doty tended post office for her husband. "The mail came through three times a week, by the Frink and Walker stage line. The stage arrived in Belvidere at night and the mail came in a big leather bag that held 8 or 10 bushels. In the winter of 1842-43, one of the coldest know in this region, Frink and Walker ran their stage on runners from Galena to Chicago until nearly the middle of April."

Wouldn't you like to have seen it going by?

## CHAPTER 10

### CRAFTSMEN AND SKILLS

A man, in traveling to a rough low land where food, shelter, and safety must all be won by his own efforts, would be apt to plan carefully what to carry with him. A woman would take her household treasures — a man his tools. Some might burden themselves with useless articles which made the journey slow and difficult. In reading the histories of leaders in the pioneering of Northern Illinois, the most valuable possession each brought with him seems to have been his own special knowledge or skill. X

This is shown on every hand. Most of the settlers were competent farmers and, to help them, came blacksmiths, carpenters, teamsters, millers, and lumbermen. Lawyers came also, to help in the protection of the property, the making of laws and keeping of records. Doctors and ministers were always welcomed. Many women, bringing what learning and culture they possessed could, when necessary, like Mrs. Lydia Lawrence, "start a school under a white oak tree". Each one threw into the life of the community whatever his special talent might be and the result was good. This chapter tells how some of these talents and skills were put to use. X

Mr. Thurston's pattern for a log cabin:

"The body of the house, about 18 feet square, was of oak logs with the bark on, the corners carried up by notch and saddle, the roof shakes laid in two or more courses, and a pole put on top to hold them down. This process was repeated to the ridge-pole. Short sticks were placed between the poles to keep them from sliding down. The cabin had a puncheon floor, two windows and one door of puncheon stuff. Most of them had a fireplace at one end, built of puncheon lined on the inside with clay and the chimney of split sticks laid up with mud. Such a house may be built with an axe and an auger and is a warm and comfortable dwelling."



## Bridges

Bridge building was a very necessary skill. The first bridge across the Kishwaukee at State Street was built in 1836 --- a very simple piece of engineering. "It was formed of stringers lying close to the water and covered with logs. In March, 1840, this bridge was carried away by the greatest freshet that ever came down the Kishwaukee --- when bark on the trees on Gooseberry Island (now Belvidere Park) was ground away by the ice twenty feet from their bases."

The second bridge was "a low frame structure, fastened by bents and lasted until 1845 when it, too, was carried away by a freshet".

The third bridge (1845) was wide enough for two roads and was originally a covered bridge but in a few years the cover was removed. This bridge was shorter and nearer the water than the present one and reached by uncovered approaches. Cornelius Cline, who also built some of our most important county roads, was its constructor. Later, Mr. Cline died on the lakes in the first cholera epidemic that visited this region.

Surveying was a most necessary skill and a number of surveyors have already been mentioned in the histories of the individual townships.

## Grist Mills

"The Baltic Mill (Belvidere Park) was erected in 1845. It was built by the Crosby Company and was owned by James B. Martyn and the Johnstones." Until such mills could be set up, all corn and other grain must be ground by hand at the nearest flour mill was at Beloit, Wisconsin.

Big Thunder Mill (near Coleman's bridge) was built in the same year by Alexander Neely and Harvey May. Later, Isaac D. Miller started the successful Little Thunder Mill on Bonus Prairie, saying that if there could be a Big Thunder Mill, why not a Little Thunder Mill also.

## Hotel Keeping

As has been said before, tavern keeping was most necessary from 1836 on until the great land rush had somehow spent itself. Travelers arrived weary and hungry

and any sort of hospitality was gratefully received and well paid for. Mr. Ames, Mr. Doty, Mr. Towner, and Mr. Truesdell have already been mentioned. Later the Julien Hotel was a very fine building running back from Logan Avenue for a block. A long porch ran its entire length and tall trees stood on the terrace. Some of the banquets and parties given there are mentioned later in this book. As railroads came into use for travel, fewer stops needed to be made and many hotel keepers turned to other occupations.

### Saw Mills

Saw mills were a most welcome addition to a community. Mrs. Bowen writes:

"After trees were chopped down there was not a foot of lumber for use without first drawing the logs away to be sawed into boards — then a long drive of nearly 80 miles (to Chicago) to buy nails, and glass for windows."

Mr. Crosby built two saw mills and Mr. Jenner writes: "Down in the hollow, near the race, lived the man that tended the mill, Dan Sheldon".

"In May, 1836, Andrew Moss and his brother Edward reached Belvidere by sailing vessel from New York. Andrew immediately took up a claim and though he was only 19, was a good carpenter and soon had charge of a force of men working for the Belvidere Company."

### Teaming

Teaming to Chicago — carrying produce and bringing back supplies — was one of the best paying occupations of the early days. Prices were as follows:

Taking 36 bushels of wheat	\$7.34
Bringing back barrel of salt	1.12-1/2

Expenses of the road were: \$.50 to the tavern keeper for supper, lodging, breakfast and hay for the horses. Oats and corn for the horses were taken from home. The trip took, usually, from five to six days.

Two men especially remembered for the raising of fine horses were Mr. George Meyer of Spring and Mr. Truesdell of Belvidere.

### Tailoring

Mrs. Bowen writes: "A tailoress lived in the vicinity who went from house



to house, cutting and making all the clothing for the men and boys, all hand sewing". As early as 1838, Mr. Jenner writes: "A man by the name of Scanlon had a tailor shop upstairs".

There was also a wool carding establishment at Newburgh.

Allen Blanchard made and repaired boots.

---

John Randall shod horses and men. "Mr. Gleason, father of Mrs. DuBois, started a blacksmith's shop on his farm and, incidentally, taught the Indians, many of whom were his friends, how to shoe their horses — being the first to instruct them."

Mr. Asher E. Jenner writes: "At 14 years of age I went to Jamestown, N.Y. to learn the trade of watch repairing and silver smithing. I left there in 1838, came around the lakes from Dunkirk to Chicago. Came on foot, father and I from Chicago to Belvidere in just two days to an hour. Got here the first day of June, 1838, at 11:00 in the morning. — I hung out my shingle and started repairing in a room that was called the storeroom of Doty's Hotel. Had all the repairing I could do for several years. Was first repairer from Chicago to Galena.

So each contributed what he could and the county grew.

## CHAPTER 11

### OUR GHOST TOWN (NEWBURGH)

"One of the most interesting and, in a sense, romantic incidents of the county is the rise and complete disappearance of Newburgh. No plat of the township was ever recorded, either in this county or Winnebago, so that it is impossible to locate where most of the lots and blocks were. The land was entered by Benjamin Hoyt in October, 1839. Mr. Hoyt erected a two-story frame tavern about 1840 which was called the Newburgh House. A school house stood about ten rods north of the tavern but was removed in 1850 to west of the tavern.

"In 1855 the teacher, Miss Eliza Marsh, had 13 pupils. On account of the weather and difficulty of travel, the terms were very short. Miss Marsh afterward became Mrs. Church, mother of Cassius Church of Belvidere.

"A saw mill was located to the north of the village, on the Beaver. There was a wool-carding establishment and a chair factory. There were two stores in the village and a blacksmith's shop. Some of the streets in the town were "Columbus", "Bridge", and "Broadway". The place was called "Sayersville" for James Sayers and in one very old record it was called "Cleveland".

"Col. Sayers was one of the leading men of Newburgh and it seemed doubtful at one time whether Belvidere or Newburgh would be the coming city. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad line was one of the earliest in the state and was known as the Galena and Chicago Union R.R. Its first engine was called proudly, "The Pioneer". When the railroad first came to Belvidere it was intended that it should pass through north of the river. However, Mr. Wm. Gilman was the owner of a large portion of the present south side and through a friend, Ebenezer Peck, was well acquainted with the leading men of the railroad company. Through his influence and because some north-siders had opposed the route, the railroad was put through on the south side of the river. The fact that Belvidere was on the State road and the failure of the railroad to pass through Newburgh caused Belvidere



the ascendancy and the dwellers of Newburgh dropped away one by one — some to Cherry Valley and elsewhere; so that only the old tavern remained high on the hill to mark the site of vanished Newburgh. Now that, too is gone.

The land on which the village stood was sold in 1847 and afterward passed into the hands of Green Brimmer and then of Mr. Brimmer's son-in-law, John P. Jones. Mr. Jones had graduated from a law school in New York, but there being very little law work in this new community, he purchased the old tavern at Newburgh and ran a dairy business. For some time, also, the county poor were kept on the Newburgh farm.

"Col. Sayre who ran the mills, was an elderly man and liked to tell of Newburgh's coming greatness. Benjamin Hoyt was a large man with a very strong voice which could be heard at a great distance, particularly when he called his negro servant. At such times the neighbors would say: "There is Hoyt whispering again". After selling his property in the county, he started to California, but died on the way."

**Note:**

Now in 1958, Newburgh had suddenly come to life again with the building of the fine new Sunstrand Manufacturing plant in that location. It might be that the dreams of its early pioneers may still come true.

## CHAPTER 12

### SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES

You will remember the description of the Mound or Court House Hill from Peck's Gazetteer of Illinois at the beginning of Chapter 8. The following paragraph is from the same article. It says:

"The citizens of this region are about to erect a college edifice in this spot, in the vault of which the bones of Big Thunder will repose. A charter was granted for this purpose in a recent session of the State Legislature."

These settlers who were our ancestors, had lived near great colleges in the East, Columbia, Harvard, Yale, and Colgate, etc., and some of those who came from England, Scotland, and Germany knew the older Universities of Europe. It is, therefore, not so strange that a college was to have been the center of this new town they planned to build. If you have ever wondered why the first three blocks of West Boone Street are so wide, this is the answer: it was to have been the approach and entrance to that dream college on the Mound.

But what became of their dream?

The reason why the college was never built was the same which caused the disappearance of the town of Newburgh — The railroad came through on the south side of the river and the center of the town was drawn in that direction. Though the dream did not come true as it was planned, perhaps it is fulfilled today in the beauty of our Community Building and in the well-run schools throughout our county.

### EARLIEST SCHOOLS

Describing one of the earliest schools Mrs. Bowen writes:

"This first school house erected in this precinct (Flora) was of logs — built in 1838, and was the only one until '47. The seats were of logs, without a back, and no plane was used in making them. It was a church on Sunday— many denominations held services there." Mrs. Bowen said the education of the girls



was mostly in the homes — churning, knitting, baking, music and spinning. "The girls took lessons upon the spinning wheel and practiced early and late on the spindle, swift and reel."

#### NEWTON ACADEMY

Mr. Jenner writes that when he arrived in 1838 there was, "up on the Mound, the frame of the Academy with the rafters not yet put on." It stood by itself, as there was no road near it. Another paragraph says: "Among the first public buildings erected in the county was Newton Academy which stood on the block afterward owned by Squire DeMunn on Madison Street in Belvidere. The framework at least of this building, was erected about 1837 and it was evidently intended to be an institution of some size and literary merit." Margaret Fuller (mentioned in an earlier chapter) found its location and prospects very attractive for, in October 1843, soon after she made her journey through Belvidere, she purchased the Academy and presented it to her brother, Arthur B. Fuller, who ran it for a short time, then sold it in 1845.

Miss Elizabeth Harvey says: "The Academy was erected in 1838. Its principal was Professor S.S. Whitman who was succeeded by a number of teachers until 1852 when the property was converted into a residence."

Another historian writes: "In 1844, Belvidere could boast of an Academy. It was a graded school, consisting of three departments — and at one time — had scholars from several different states."

#### ELECTIVE SCHOOLS

Until 1850 all schools were "elective". By this, it meant that anyone wishing to teach engaged a room, then went about finding pupils, who paid a regular tuition. The first school of this kind, and in fact, the first school held in Belvidere, was taught by Miss Cates in 1837. As these schools were conducted by single individuals, they were not kept up long, and in 1838, another school of the same nature was started by Miss Sheldon at the corner of State and what is now Perry Street. In 1839, Miss Penny continued a school in the same place and Miss Harriet King, daughter

of the Reverend Dr. John King, opened a school on State Street. Miss Rebecca Loop --- sister of Mrs. Towner --- taught also during the winter of '36-37 at the Towner family residence.

#### MR. PETIT'S SCHOOL

Judge Carpenter writes: "This was a school of some 86 pupils --- D.B. Petit operated this school for about six months before leaving Belvidere on a trip East. During his absence students were taught by Jeremiah Phillips who came here in February, '46, to visit his sister and, while making this visit, engaged in teaching. After Mr. Petit returned, he and Mr. Phillips continued teaching together for six years. They transferred from one building to another, using quarters available in rooms above stores, in the court house and in the Academy building. A story is told of one of the pupils of Mr. Petit's school who jumped out of the window and rushed down the hill and across lots to the river when the first train came through on the railroad, and was followed at full speed by the teacher, more interested in catching him than in seeing the train."

#### PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Quoted from the Standard: "About this time (1842) the lands had become taxable and people wealthy enough to maintain public schools and to build school houses". "In 1854, the stone part of what is now Lincoln School was built on land purchased from the county and which was formerly a part of the Public Square. General Hurlbut was appointed by the county authorities to convey the land. There were three rooms. One of the principal events in the history of the old stone building was an entertainment which took place there, the prominent feature of it being that the floor went down, leaving some of the audience seated high above all others in the window-sills".

In 1858-59 there was added to the stone building another and larger one of brick at great expense. Note: After being known for many years as Main Street school, its name was changed to Lincoln. Much enlarged, it still stands, strong and very beautiful.



## MR. DUNHAM'S SCHOOL — GARDEN PRAIRIE

Dr. W.H. Dunham writes: "I ~~came~~ to Garden Prairie in A.D. 1863, ~~as a~~ teacher in the public school of that place. There were 100 pupils of all grades, mostly adults. The studies consisted of reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, map-drawing, algebra, and mental arithmetic — all with one teacher and poor accommodations. But the teacher ~~was~~ successful ~~and~~ the school quite interesting. Many of the citizens who were pupils then, have families — who ~~now~~ grace the ~~new~~ and improved school houses, properly graded, with modern improvements in furniture and teaching. I ~~was~~ elected Superintendent of Schools. — Public and private examinations for teaching were held throughout the county and among those receiving certificates were; Honorable Charles E. Fuller (Congressman), Mr. J.R. Balliett and wife, Miss Flora Fellows, Mrs. Witbeck, Mr. Cowan of Poplar Grove and F.I. Hall of Flora."

Miss Harvey writes: "Efforts to establish schools on the south side of Belvidere ~~were~~ not successful until 1857 when increasing population necessitated erection of two frame buildings housed 1st. and 2nd. grades the other, 3rd. to 6th., and the brick building, junior and senior High Schools. The two wooden structures were sold in '83 and the brick building increased in size."

Washington School was erected in 1893, Logan in 1896, Perry in 1900, and our present high school in 1915. The ~~new~~ Washington School located on 5th Avenue now includes, beside the grade school for that section, the Junior High School for the entire city.

A German Parochial School ~~was~~ started on the south side in 1886 — its present school built in 1908. The Catholic School is on Logan Avenue — set back from the highway with a fine large playground. Schools in the northern part of the county ~~are~~ becoming increasingly distinguished for fine teaching and management.

## CHURCHES

### Presbyterian

The Presbyterian Church of Belvidere ~~was~~ organized at the home of Stephen Burnet, March 17, 1839.

The Articles of Faith and Covenant now in use were adopted then. Up to the arrival of Colonel Joel Walker, the congregation worshipped at the residence of Mr. Burnet and then in Col. Walker's log cabin across the prairie, three miles north of Belvidere, until the following spring.

In 1839, Col. Walker erected a frame store building on the northwest corner of State Street and Lincoln Avenue. The second story of this building he gave to the Presbyterian congregation to be used as their place of worship. It was dedicated in June, 1840, and occupied for three years. In June, 1841, Reverend Nathaniel Wright was installed as its first pastor with a salary of \$400 a year.

In 1843, the Presbyterians built their first church on what is now the corner of Main Street and Lincoln Avenue. The present church, on the same site, was built in 1857 and has since been remodeled — at one time having Corinthian columns and a spire. In 1874, its grounds were enlarged to provide space for horse sheds and the park between the Presbyterian and North Baptist churches. A house was purchased in 1880 and the very beautiful residence of the John Crocker Foote estate became the property of the Presbyterian Church a few years after his death — for use as a Sunday School, etc.

Note: Recently the old house was removed and a new one built. Another lot at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Webster Street has been purchased also for the use of its expanding congregation.

Judge Carpenter says: "Much responsibility in the conduct of the Presbyterian Sunday School in its early days was borne by Col. Walker who, from its beginning to his death was zealous for its prosperity." Judge Carpenter himself was Superintendent of the Sunday School for two years. He says also, — Probably the most earnest worker in the history of the church was Deacon Henry W. Avery and it is to him and his wife that we are indebted for our Y.M.C.A. building — their gift to the city in 1903.



## NORTH BAPTIST

The first religious sermon was preached here in March, 1836, by Dr. John S. King. There were quite a number of Baptists here at that time. "Every door was kindly opened and a house was filled every sabbath, whether for preaching or a praise meeting." The first regular pastor was Professor S.S. Whitman.

In 1838 a small frame building was erected to be used for both a church and other purposes. Its history you have read in Chapter 7 -- the little building which was also our first Court House. Later a brick church was built on the same site as the present Baptist Church and, later still, the large brick structure which is now in use. This had a very tall spire which was removed some years ago because of danger from lightning. Mr. J.H. Saxton has written a very valuable history of the North Baptist church.

## SOUTH BAPTIST

In 1865 about 65 members left the North Baptist congregation to form the South Baptist Church of Belvidere. This, also, has a fine house of worship on Logan Avenue near South State Street. A former church was destroyed by fire in December, 1871.

## METHODIST

"Some time during the year 1838, the first Methodist preacher was heard in Belvidere. The first Methodist place of worship was the second story of a frame building commenced by Mr. Fisk on the Rockford road between Belvidere and Beaver Creek; but which, soon after being raised, was pulled down and re-erected at the corner of State and Perry, opposite the Towner Hotel. At a later period they moved, for one winter, into a building occupied by Dr. Whitney for a law office, on the end of the lot where the Presbyterian Church now stands. The next year was into a building on State Street, originally intended to be used for a hardware store by Elijah Hotchkiss.

"In 1850, a brick church was built on the north side; in 1866 about 24 members of the first church withdrew and formed a class on the south side. Until 1876 regular services were held in both churches, the Reverend N.H. Axtel supplying

both. In 1879, the churches chose separate ministers and continued in this way until they were again united during the pastorate of the Reverend S.H. Swartz." The Methodist Church has now a very beautiful building and manse, with chimes added a few years ago to its tower. Now, (1958) it is, like most of our churches, searching for new space in which to expand.

#### TRINITY EPISCOPAL

"This church building was completed in 1857. While comparatively small in numbers, it includes some of the oldest and most prominent families of Belvidere. — The church, at the corner of Hurlbut Avenue and Main Street, is a gracefully designed structure with a spire somewhat on the lines of the English churches and using the very beautiful Episcopal ritual."

#### CATHOLIC

"For the early years in Belvidere history, Catholic services were held from time to time by priests from Donnelly's settlement in McHenry county. The first mass in Belvidere was held at the residence of Mr. & Mrs. Cornelius Connelly at the corner of Hurlbut Avenue and Webster Street.

The land where the church now stands was donated by Colonel William H. Gilman. The kind offer was accepted and a stone church built. "— In 1864, Reverend Patrick McGuire came as the first resident priest in Belvidere. Many people of all denominations have been grateful for the St. Joseph Hospital, the first large hospital built in the county.

#### FREE METHODIST

The Free Methodist Church was organized November, 1860, and purchased the building at the corner of North Main and Perry Streets from the Congregational society. Since buying the Camp Epworth grounds a few years ago, their church has much increased its influence in the community. The Free Methodist summer school has interested and benefited boys and girls from many denominations.



## GERMAN EVANGELICAL ( ST. JOHN'S )

The German Evangelical Society was organized September, 1867, with a membership of eight. It met at various places until 1873 when the society purchased a residence and remodeled it into a house of worship. Another church and a parsonage were built in 1888, then the present fine brick building at the corner of Main and Madison was erected in 1907. This church has always been active in all charitable work but particularly so during war-time in Red Cross and caring for refugees.

## GERMAN LUTHERAN

"In 1868 the Reverend A. Wagner of Chicago came to Belvidere delivering sermons to the German Lutherans of the town. Early in '69, about 20 families were organized into a congregation and sent a call to Reverend Philip Estel, which was accepted. Services were held in private homes and at the Court House. In 1875, they succeeded in buying the former Congregational Church on West Boone Street, which they now occupy with a large and most faithful congregation. Reverend E. Heineman was its pastor for many years. This church also maintains its own grade school.

## SWEDISH COVENANT

The Swedish Covenant Church in Belvidere has always been a strong organization but during the last few years (1955-58) it has grown so rapidly that its members have now found it necessary to build a large new church and parsonage on the north edge of town with plenty of room about it for future expansion. Many citizens not necessarily of Swedish lineage have joined its congregation.

## CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Of the Christian Science Church, Judge Carpenter says: "The Church of Christ Scientist conducts its service over Longcor's drug store. Mrs. Morrison was, until recently, the reader". At that time the Christian Science Church, was, itself, a pioneer, but now has a church of its own on North State Street next to the Public Library. Two of those who worked most earnestly to establish it were

Mrs. Joseph and Mrs. John Tefft. Whenever an especially helpful speaker comes to Belvidere, the Christian Science Church invites friends from all the other congregations to join them.

So each denomination came and sturdily set up its own altar. In no place could there have been more religious freedom. If there was any disagreement it seems to have been between members of the same congregation rather than with outsiders. In fact, several churches often shared the same buildings, such as schools, the Court House, etc., for their worship.

Mr. William Bowley tells of standing on a street corner watching his father, who, at that time, taught a large class of young men in the Methodist Sunday School, drop the first silver dollar into the contribution for the Salvation Army at its first meeting in Belvidere.

#### Jehovah's WITNESSES

Jehovah's witnesses, though having no church of their own, have always exerted a steady and steadying influence for good in our community both through their literature and by their personal ministry.

Note: It was not possible in so short a history to include the many churches both large and small all over our county. Each has its own personality, such as the Scottish Church at Argyle, etc. Any history of them would fill a large book.



## CHAPTER 13

### NATURAL HISTORY

SOIL    ROCKS    RIVERS    ANIMALS    FLOWERS    TREES

#### SOIL

"According to geological investigations there have been three different periods when glaciers have covered more or less of the state of Illinois. — According to the soil map issued by the state, practically all of Boone County except that along the Kishwaukee River was covered by the second Iowan glaciation. This left brown sandy soil made up of 3,070 pounds of nitrogen, 850 pounds of phosphorous and 26,700 pounds of potassium in two million pounds of surface soil. This would be low in nitrogen but the porous sandy loam affords a much more extensive feeding range for plant roots than more closely packed soil, and so is adequate for the production of large crops".

#### ROCKS

"The rock under-lying Boone County is limestone with very few boulders or hard heads to trouble the farmers."

Note: The archway to the entrance of Belvidere Park on West Lincoln Avenue was a gift from the estate of Alexander Watson. To obtain rocks beautiful enough for this purpose the workmen at the Park made a number of trips to Wisconsin where such boulders could be obtained near the lakes. These were brought to Belvidere where they were shaped and set in place.

Not many fossils are found about Boone County, as the limestone of which they might have been formed is so easily broken. Some interesting ones are scattered about the county in various collections.

#### WATER

"The artesian water in Boone County is very good. No trouble has ever been had with typhoid fever. Most county wells are set on high land and free from swamps."

## ANIMALS

Concerning animals, Judge Carpenter writes: "A Boone County landscape without a number of ~~cows~~ in it would not ~~seem~~ home-like."

Buffaloes most certainly roamed in this region in early times, as they ~~were~~ in great numbers in southern Illinois. Deer were plentiful, wolves troublesome. Some wolves are still caught and brought in for bounty. There are, of course, the small animals with which we ~~are~~ all familiar — fox, chipmunk, weasel, gopher, muskrat, and mink." Many squirrels and rabbits ~~now~~ make their homes in the city, finding it safer there than in the woods and fields.

## BIRDS

Mrs. Clara Lampert who is known ~~as~~ one of the most enthusiastic and best informed bird lovers of the county contributed a delightful section on bird life to Judge Carpenter's book. She says:

"— though this account must be ~~so~~ short, if you will look for your bird neighbors you will find more of them and learn far ~~more~~ about them than ~~can~~ be told in a book ~~as~~ big ~~as~~ this history itself. — during the migration of the birds, city dwellers have one of the keenest delights of country life brought to their very doors, because many birds, migrating mostly at night, ~~are~~ attracted by the lights of the city and stop off ~~in~~ their long journey to feed, ~~so~~ that a city park often contains a greater variety of feathered visitors than an equal ~~area~~ in the country."

"Our Kishwaukee River ~~and~~ the small Piscasaw and Beaver offer ~~very~~ attractions to the inhabitants of the bird world. We have plenty of water birds, loons, tern, ducks, geese, bittern, heron, snipe, sand-pipers, kingfishers, and killdeer." Note: (This was written several years ago.)

"Of the pigeon family ~~we~~ have the tame pigeons and mourning doves, but the passenger pigeons which ~~once~~ darkened the sky with their flight have ~~now~~ disappeared."



Mrs. Lampert names many varieties of hawks and owls which, with the exception of the Cooper's hawk, she says ~~are~~ mostly helpful to the farmer. "The woodpeckers are of great economic value. Hairy and downy woodpeckers remain in our county the year around."

The ~~names~~ of our county birds which Mrs. Lampert enumerates go on like music: "Evening and rose-breasted grosbeak, white-winged ~~grosbeak~~ bill, purple finch, gold finch, white-crowned sparrow, song and swamp sparrows, indigo bunting, dickcissel and many others. And at the end she says: "The thrushes ~~are~~ given first place among birds for their singing and are also first in ~~our~~ hearts for their loveable qualities." As you all know the State bird of Illinois is the cardinal — beautiful, a fine singer and a good neighbor.

#### TREES, PLANTS, WILD-FLOWERS

Miss Alice Munn contributed to Judge Carpenter's book ~~an~~ article on this subject:

The timber of Boone County is unevenly distributed. The townships of Spring and Flora and most of the county south of the Kishwaukee, is ~~a~~ broad, comparatively level prairie. North of the Kishwaukee the county changes in appearance, becoming more rolling. More streams are seen. There are wide stretches of thin timber and brushwood extending for miles along these streams and over the intervening hills. The northeastern part of the county is the most heavily wooded.

"The timber more common is several varieties of oak and hickory. Beside these we find black walnut, butternut, bitternut, cottonwood, honey-locust, sycamore, water and slippery elm, poplar, white and black ash, basswood, willow, thorn, wild plum, wild crab, black cherry and ~~an~~ occasional white pine."

"The native flowers of Boone County, since the lowlands have been tilled and the timber cleared, ~~are~~ rapidly disappearing beneath the plowshare. None of the varieties are, however, obsolete and the nature lover is (still) delighted

from early April when the hepaticas lift up their delicate heads until September frosts kill the red and purple asters that give patches of color to the country road sides.

"There are to be found in the sloughs, cow-slips (marsh marigolds) butter-cups, iris and cat-tails. On the higher prairies grow at least five varieties of violets, also goldenrod, shooting-stars, wild phlox, harebells, Indian tobacco, tansy, blue vervain and wild strawberry.

"In the woods are anemonees, blood-root, dog-tooth violets, Dutchman's breeches, mandrake, and columbine. Ferns grow abundantly and wild grape vines, woodbine, wild honeysuckle, and bittersweet make our groves beautiful."

Note: Some of these conditions may have changed since this article was printed (1909) but the changes have been made by man and wherever they are allowed to grow, these same trees, vines and flowers spring up in great abundance.

1. Name the principal farm products of Boone County.



## CHAPTER 14

### THE CIVIL WAR

Perhaps sometime, there will be a happy country which has no wars to record; but with the firing on Fort Sumter the Civil War came to Belvidere. In times of peril to the nation, certain men stand out --- not always as the bravest, for at such times there is great courage everywhere --- but for their qualities of leadership. Such were the following in our county.

#### STEPHEN A. HURLBUT

"When in 1861 President Lincoln called for volunteers a meeting was held in Belvidere at which a young man, Stephen A. Hurlbut, made one of the most soul stirring speeches that ever electrified an audience. Under his direction a company was formed and taken to Freeport to join the Fifteenth regiment of Illinois volunteers. This was the first company raised in the state for the regular service of three years. Mr. Hurlbut served as its captain.

"In June of 1862, he was appointed Brigadier General and commanded the Fourth Division at Pittsburg Landing. General Hurlbut has the credit of forming the best line of battle and saving the day to the Union Army at the battle of Shiloh, and for meritorious service on that occasion was appointed Major General in September, 1862. Was assigned to the command of the Sixteenth Army Corp at Memphis and to the command of the Department of the Gulf in '64-65. Was honorably mustered out in July, 1865."

#### MAJOR CHARLES B. LOOP

"Mr. Loop enlisted in the Ninety Fifth Regiment Illinois Infantry Volunteers, went out as captain and was afterward promoted to Major of that company in the field."

#### GENERAL ALLEN C. FULLER

"Mr. Allen C. Fuller came to Belvidere in 1846 and immediately took high rank among the lawyers of that day. He was elected judge of the Circuit Court, which office he held until July, 1861, when he resigned to accept the position

of Adjutant General of the state under Governor Yates, the war governor of Illinois.

#### COLONEL L. O. GILMAN

"Colonel L. O. Gilman was born in the Province of Quebec. Came to Belvidere in 1860. Became Colonel in the Fifteenth Illinois Volunteer Infantry. Was at the battle of Pittsburg Landing, Siege of Corinth, Siege of Vicksburg, and in General Sherman's campaign in '64 until wounded at Atlanta."

#### JUDGE WALES W. WOOD

"Enlisted as a private in Company G of the Ninety-Fifth, was then chosen as Second Lieutenant of that company, was afterward promoted and mustered in at Camp Fuller, Rockford, as First Lieutenant and Adjutant of the Ninety Fifth, and during the campaign and siege of Vicksburg, served as Assistant Adjutant General to General John McArthur who commanded the Sixth Division of the 17th Army Corp, Army of Tennessee under General U. S. Grant."

Note: The entire sketch of Judge Wood's ancestry in the back of the Boone County history reads like a historical romance.

Judge Carpenter writes:

"For a record of what our soldier boys did in the Civil War, it has been customary for years to turn to Judge Wales W. Wood. We have been fortunate in securing him to prepare that portion of this history. Judge Wood was adjutant of the "Old Ninety Fifth", Illinois Volunteers, which is so closely related to Boone County history. In 1865, he published a valuable history of that regiment which is still being sought for by some of the large libraries ---."

Note: The remainder of this chapter is from Judge Wood's account.

#### CIVILIAN ACTIVITIES

"The County of Boone, though consisting of only eight townships, and commonly known as "Little Boone", performed a great work and proved an important factor in helping to carry on the war for the Union and subduing the rebellion of 1861-1865.

"--- Immediately after the firing on Fort Sumter, the patriotic citizens aroused to action in support of the government and commenced holding meetings for



the purpose of raising means and furnishing volunteers for the Union Army. — Meetings were held for this purpose in churches and halls and were attended by all classes of citizens, members of religious groups and political parties all laying aside their usual differences and uniting solidly on the common platform of "One Country and One Flag". These patriotic gatherings were addressed by Dr. Whitney, Allen C. Fuller, Stephen A. Hurlbut, Dr. Molony, C.B. Loop, and others.

"Statistics show that, including the ~~amounts~~ raised to pay soldier's bounties and to help support their families — liberal ~~sums~~ freely contributed by citizens from time to time, and by the generous appropriations made by all the eight townships, ~~over~~ \$300,000 was furnished by "Little Boone".

"Equally true it is that, that, in like proportion she stands unexcelled in the number of volunteers she furnished for various regiments which took conspicuous part and performed brave and valiant deeds on many a battle field throughout the war."

"For Boone not only furnished one full company (B) of the Fifteenth Illinois Volunteers, three full companies (B, G, and K) of the Ninety Fifth Illinois Volunteers but also a large number of volunteers for many other regiments and commands in the infantry, cavalry, and artillery."

Note: A record of every ~~man~~ and the part of the service in which ~~he~~ performed may be found in the Public Library. In this book we ~~can~~ give only the history of the two regiments most closely connected with our county and memorable notes from a few others.

#### THE FIFTEENTH INFANTRY

##### Captains

Wm. Haywood  
David L. Baker  
Wesley W. Jones  
Lemuel O. Gilman

##### First Lieutenants

Addison N. Longcor  
Daniel L. Clark  
Joseph Devlin

Second Lieutenants	Charles Outcalt
Sergeants	James L. Tisdell Job Kenyon
Corporals	Beverly Whitney Deeter Thomas Albert Wheeler

"The Fifteenth Regiment, Illinois Volunteers ~~was~~ organized at Freeport, Illinois, and mustered into the U.S. Service May 24, 1861 — being the first regiment organized in the state for the three year's service. It then proceeded to Alton, Illinois for six weeks for instructions. Left for Hannibal, Missouri, thence by steamboat to Jefferson Barracks; then by rail to Rolla, Missouri. Arrived in time to cover General Siegel's retreat from Wilson Creek; then joined General Fremont's Army. — To Sedalia with General Pope and assisted in the capture of 1,300 of the ~~army~~ a few miles from the latter place. --- Went into winter quarters at Otterville, Mo., December 26, '61. --- Remained until February 1. Marched to Jefferson City, thence to St. Louis by rail; embarked on transports for Fort Donelson, arriving there the day of the surrender."

"The regiment ~~was~~ there assigned to the Fourth Division, General Hurlbut commanding — embarked on transport for Pittsburg Landing. Participated in the battles of the Sixth and Seventh of April, losing 252 men, killed and wounded. Among the former ~~were~~ Lieutenant-Colonel E.T.W. Ellis, Major Goddard, Captains Brownell and Wayne and Lieutenant John W. Puterbaugh. The regiment then marched to Corinth, participating in various skirmishes and the siege of that place, losing a number of ~~men~~ killed and wounded.

"After the evacuation of Corinth, the regiment marched to Memphis, arriving there July 21, 1862, and remained until September 6. Marched to Bolivar, thence to the Hatchie River and participated in the battle of the Hatchie. Lost fifty, killed and wounded, in that engagement. Returned to Bolivar, thence to LaGrange, thence, with General Grant, down through Mississippi to Coffeeville. Returned to LaGrange, and Memphis; thence to Vicksburg taking an active part in the siege of



that place. After the surrender of Vicksburg, marched with Sherman to Natchez, then to Harrisburg, La., capturing Fort Beauregard on the Wichita River. Returned to Natchez, remained there until November 10, '63. Proceeded to Vicksburg and into winter quarters."

"Here the regiment re-enlisted as veterans, remaining until February 10, 1864, when it moved with General Sherman through Mississippi. On Champion Hill had a severe engagement with Carney. Marched to Meridian, thence south to Enterprise; thence back to Vicksburg, was then ordered to Illinois on ~~vacation~~ furlough.

On expiration of furlough, joined 17th Army Corp. Proceeded up the Tennessee River to Clinton, thence to Huntsville, Alabama, thence to Decatur and Rome, Georgia, thence to Kingston, and again joined General Sherman's Army, marching on Atlanta.

"At Alatoona Pass the 14th and 15th Infantry were consolidated and the organization was known as the Veteran Battalion Fourteenth and Fifteenth Illinois and numbered 625 men. From Altoona Pass it proceeded to Ackworth and was there assigned to duty, guarding the Chattanooga and Atlanta Railroad. Whilst engaged in this duty, the regiment being scattered along the line of railroad, the rebel General Hood, marching north, struck the road at Big Shanty and Ackworth and captured about 300 of the command. The remainder retreated and acted as scouts for General F. P. Blair and marched with General Sherman through Georgia.

"After the capture of Savannah, the regiment proceeded to Beaufort, South Carolina thence to Salkahatchie River, participating in various skirmishes in that vicinity (Columbia, S.C., Fayetteville, N.C., Battle of Bentonville) losing a number wounded, thence to Goldsboro and Raleigh. The campaign of General Sherman ended by the surrender of General Johnson.

"The regiment then marched with the Army to Washington, D.C. — and participated in the grand review May 24, '65. Remained there two weeks. The regiment was then detached from the Fourth Division, 17th Army Corp and proceeded by steamer to St. Louis, thence to Fort Leavenworth where they were mustered out, September, 1865, having served 4 years and 4 months."

Number of miles marched	—	4,299
Number of miles by rail	—	2,403
Number of miles by steamer	—	4,310

Total Traveled	—	11,012
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Number of men joined — 1,963

Number mustered out — 840

#### NINETY-FIFTH INFANTRY

Major	Charles B. Loop
Adjutant	Wales W. Wood
Surgeon	George N. Woodard

Company A	Captain	James N. Tisdell
Company B	Captain	Elliott N. Rush
Company C	Captain	Henry M. Rush
Company K	Captain	Gabriel E. Cornell
Company I	Captain	Almon Shellenger

"The Ninety-Fifth Infantry Illinois Volunteers was organized at Camp Fuller, Rockford, in August, 1862, and mustered into the U.S. Service September 4, '62."

"The regiment moved from camp November 4th and proceeded — to Grand Junction, Tennessee where it was assigned to General McArthur's Division, Army of the Tennessee. Took part in General Grant's campaign in Northern Mississippi in the winter of '62.

"Moved from Memphis to Milliken's Bend in the spring of '63. Participated in the march to Grand Gulf and all the battles between that place and the rear of Vicksburg. Was in the charges of May 19th and 22nd., losing 25 killed, 124 wounded and 10 missing — a much heavier loss than that of any other regiment in the division.

"In March, 1864, went on Red River expedition under General A. J. Smith, and was engaged at the capture of Fort DeRussy and in the battle of Old River, Cloutierville, Mansouri, Yellow Bayou and all the movements of that advance and retreat."

"In May, 1864, returned to Vicksburg and soon after, moved to Memphis and took part in the ill-fated Sturgis expedition. Was in the battle of Guntown, and fought with undaunted bravery, but was over powered and, with the whole of Sturgis' army, retreated in confusion to Memphis. Col. Thomas W. Humphrey was killed and nearly the whole regiment was killed, wounded or made prisoners. The campaign nearly annihilated the regiment.



"After recruiting at Memphis, the command, in August, joined General Mower. Moved up White River and marched from Brownsville through Arkansas to Missouri in pursuit of Price. The Ninety-Fifth arrived at Benton Barracks, November '64. On November 30, moved to Nashville, Tennessee. Took part in battle of Nashville, December 15 and 16, and in pursuit of Hood's defeated army, moved up the river to Easrport. In February, embarked for NewOrleans, arriving February 21."

"On 14th day of March, moved to Dauphin Island, at mouth of Mobile Bay. On the 18th, landed at Cedar Point with Col. Moore's Brigade and commenced the first offensive operations against Mobile. Took part in General Canby's movement from Fish River. During the siege of Spanish Fort carried its trenches to within 30 yards of the enemy's works, and participated in the storming and capture of the fort, April 8, being the first regiment to occupy what ~~was~~ known, in the rebel lines, ~~as~~ the "Red Fort"."

After the fall of Mobile, the 95th marched to Montgomery, Alabama arriving April 25. From thence, moved to Opelika, Alabama.

"July 18th, started home. August 3rd, arrived at Vicksburg: 10th at St. Louis and moved to Camp Butler, Illinois, where, August '65, it was mustered out."

"During the summer of '64 the regiment had a detachment of 100 men with Major C. B. Loop, Captain James Nish and Captain A. S. Stewart in charge. This detachment participated in the battle of Kenesaw Mountain, Chattahoochie River, Atlanta, Jonesboro and Lovejoy Station.

#### OTHER REGIMENTS AND COMMANDS (PARTIAL HISTORY)

##### FORTY-FIFTH INFANTRY

"The Washburne Lead Mine regiment was organized in Chicago, December 25, 1861. Became the Forty-Fifth Infantry Ill. Volunteers in January. (On) February 4, landed below Fort Henry ~~on~~ the Tennessee and, on the 6th, marched into fort, it having surrendered to the gunboats. February 11, moved toward Fort Donelson and during the succeeding days, bore its part of the suffering of the battle. The flag of the 45th was the first planted ~~on~~ the enemies' works.

"The 45th took a conspicuous and honorable part in the two day's battle of Shiloh, losing 26 killed and 199 wounded or missing."

First Lieutenant

Edwin L. Lawrence

Officers

John A. Rollins

John P. Jones

"During June and July of '62, engaged in garrison and guard duty. August 11, assigned to guarding the railroad near Toon's Station. On the 31st, after much desperate fighting, Companies C and D ~~were~~ captured. The remainder of the regiment concentrating at Toon's Station ~~were~~ able to resist the attack of largely outnumbering forces. December, communication with the north having been cut off, foraged on the country for supplies. Their colonel, John E. Smith, promoted to Brigadier General."

#### ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SECOND INFANTRY

Organized at Freeport June 18, '64, for ~~one~~ hundred days. Moved to Memphis ~~and~~ assigned to guarding Memphis and Charleston Railroad. Mustered out October 27.

Captain

James M. Humphrey

Lieutenant

Luther C. Lawrence

Sergeants

Nathan Wooster, H. L. Bennett

Joseph Dustin, Orville Dean

Corporals

L. L. Shattuck, Rollin Park, R. Smiley

Musician

Charles Coleman

#### ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THIRD INFANTRY

Organized for ~~one~~ year. Regiment ~~was~~ assigned to Defenses of Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.

#### NINTH CAVALRY

In this part of the service, Boone County ~~was~~ made a long, strenuous and honorable record for the entire duration of the war.

"A detachment of this regiment was with General Sturgis on the ill-fated expedition to Guntown, Mississippi (described in the record of the Ninety-Fifth) and ~~was~~ rear guard for the disorganized command on that retreat."

#### OFFICERS

Colonel

Joseph W. Harper

Major

Leander L. Shattuck

Captain

Harvey M. Jenner



# CASUALTIES (Partial List)

John Stoner	----	Killed At Shiloh	April '62
Calvin Keeler	----	Killed at Corinth	May '61
Lieut. James S. Moss	----	Killed	May '63
Corp. Stephen A. Rollins	----	Killed at Guntown	Aug. '62
Albert E. Locke	----	Killed at Vicksburg	Aug. '62
Wagoner Benj. Easton	----	Died at Memphis	June '63
Wm. Boyce	----	Died at Memphis	Feb. '63
John Sexton	----	Died at Memphis	June '64
Wm. H. Mead	----	Died at Vicksburg	Feb. '64
James Miller	----	Died at Vicksburg	Feb. '65
Wm. McNelly	----	Died at Rome	July '64
A. W. Siebert	----	Died at Louisville	July '64
E. N. Strong	----	Died in Andersonville Prison	Sept. '64
John L. Alderman	----		April '63
George Bassett	----	Killed at Vicksburg	Aug. '62
Wm. Bassett	----	Killed at Vicksburg	May '63
Richard O. <del>Stann</del>	----	Died in Keokuk	Dec. '63
Wm. Gunn	----	Killed at Vicksburg	May '63
Lieut. Joseph N. Collier	----	Died	June '63
H. S. Butterfield	----	Died in Lagrange, Tenn.	Jan. '63
Ser. Joseph W. Bowman	----	Memphis	Feb. '63
Wm. Baker	----	Killed in Vicksburg	May '63
A. T. Knox	----	Killed in Vicksburg	June '63
S. W. Spencer	----	Died in Vicksburg	July '63
E. M. Slater	----	Died in Simsport, La.	May '64
Wagoner Hiram Reed	----	Died	March '65
A. S. Linderman	----	Died in Nashville	April '65
Eli Atkinson	----		Aug. '62
Commissary Ser. C.F. Ludden-	----	Died (of Wounds)	Dec. '64
Frank Shafer	----	Died Memphis	Aug. '64
Robert Peters	----	Killed	Nov. '64
O. A. Turner	----	Died Nashville	'61
Caleb N. Brown	----	Died	Mar. '65
Alfred McDade	----	Died in rebel prison about	July '65

So these ~~names~~ and many others go on down the black pages.

When, on next Memorial Day at the cemetery when a salute is fired and you think of your own soldier brother, father or friend, perhaps you will think too of the many Boone County men and boys who died so far away in the southland, that our nation might be held together and slavery no more exist.

## CHAPTER 15

### LOCAL ITEMS

"The Belvidere Standard was a newspaper begun in 1851 by Ralph Roberts and was an excellent paper for a young community. It was democratic in politics up to the organization of the Republican party in 1856, when it became a strong advocate of that party. General Fuller preserved all copies of the "Standard" from 1865-1893 and at his death they were presented to the Ida Public Library, from whence these items are taken."

#### Author's note:

Boone County is not made up of people who do things hurriedly only to be sorry afterward, or to have their plans collapse. They may talk and argue for years as to (1) whether or not to have busses; (2) whether or not to have parking meters; or (3) about a home for older people, etc., but what they finally decide is usually a success. After reading these news items of other days you may not worry so much when there is a break in the dam --- there used to be one every spring and it was promptly repaired. You may wonder why it took so long to buy a fire engine, and we are sure you will be glad when you read that the wandering little library finally finds a home "on the upper floor of the new City Hall".

1865

April 11 Two or three thousand persons assembled in the streets of the city to celebrate Lee's surrender and the close of the Civil War. Buildings were decorated, the Wide-A-Wakes turned out and speeches were made by General Fuller, Captain Coon, and Dr. Molony.

April 16 Lincoln's death plunged Belvidere into great gloom. Union services were held by all the churches in the Presbyterian Church on Sunday morning. A great throng.

Many of the boys in blue were returning in June.



July 4 The Fourth of July celebration took place on Gooseberry Island. The procession included a float of young ladies representing all the states of the Union. Five to six thousand were present. A display of fireworks on the Court House Square closed the festivities in the evening. General Stephen A. Hurlbut who had just returned from the war, spoke amid great enthusiasm.

Census of Belvidere in 1865 was 3,361.

August 22 The "Old Ninety Fifth" regiment of Illinois Volunteers returned home. Companies B, G, and I were from Boone County. A very large crowd assembled and the train arrived shortly after dinner time amid much confusion of welcome given the soldier boys by fathers, mothers, wives, and sweethearts. A procession was formed, then there were speeches, a banquet, more impromptu speeches and parties in the evening at Union Hall and at Ames' Hall.

County Fair held. Among the exhibits was James Kelley's 76 varieties of apples from his orchard of 1,000 trees.

Adelphi Hall completed. Was dedicated by a grand ball on Thanksgiving eve. Tickets were \$5. Seventeen sets danced at one time. General Fuller made a speech and Messers. Traver of the Julien Hotel served the supper. Note: At this time the Julien was a very fine hotel.

December Mr. S. Molony completed his gothic house, costing over \$10,000. Note: This is now the E. A. Loop house.

1866

February Wooden awnings in front of Conger and Vanwise's grocery store fell down, the posts having been gnawed by horses.

June Railroad bridge totally destroyed by fire and, after burning about an hour, fell into the river.

Colonel Gilman	elected	Sheriff
Stephen A. Hurlbut	■	Representative
Daniel E. Foote	■	Coroner

1867

February Clara Barton, the noted nurse during the Civil War, lectured in the Presbyterian Church.

Wendell Phillips spoke in Adelphi Hall on "Reconstruction".

1869

Velocipedes were being ridden by the men.

General Stephen A. Hurlbut nominated as United States minister to Bogota.

Petroleum B. Nasby lectured, April 4.

May 11 Apple and cherry trees blossom in abundance.

Mr. Doty has raised the frame of his new hotel, located on the flats. "This building, we suppose, is the first of a row which will extend along there at no distant date. It wanted Doty to pioneer the thing."

May 31 Decoration Day exercises were held at the cemetery. Among the speakers was General Doubleday who fired the first gun at Fort Sumter on the Union side.

"The Board of Trustees have caused several lamps to be placed along our streets, which, we suppose, will do duty on dark nights although there are not enough of them to light up very much."

Boone County Agricultural Society this year:

Dudley W. Gates	-----President
George Reed	-----Vice President
A. E. Jenner	-----Secretary and Treasurer

July 4 "The attraction this year was a procession of 75 firemen of the Winnebago Fire and Hose companies in uniform with contests between engines from Rockford and Harvard. "Anvils were fired and bells rung very early in the morning. About 2,500 people were present and the day was fine and cool. Slater's Cornet Band and the band from Poplar Grove furnished music. Fireworks in the evening."

Note: In 1869, cows were still allowed to roam about the city. The paper suggests that citizens trim the lower branches of their shade trees along the street, "not leaving it for the cows to chew them off".



County officers elected:

Luther W. Lawrence	-----Judge
Major C. B. Loop	-----County Clerk
Colonel L. O. Gilman	-----County Treasurer
W. H. Dunham	-----Superintendent of Schools

1870

"Y.M.C.A. elected officers. The society appears to have had several meetings before this time."

This year, government officials buying horses for the U. S. Cavalry spent several days in Belvidere, having their headquarters at Truesdell's stables, and about 30 horses were purchased, from \$90 to \$100 each.

At the corporation election, several colored citizens voted, for the first time, under the Fifteenth Amendment.

April A freshet in the river broke through the Baltic Dam, about twenty feet wide.

A petition being circulated asking the Board of Trustees to purchase some hand fire engines, the question being whether the town should purchase one steam fire engine; two hand engines or; no engine at all.

April 13 Osgood and Ellison's stable near the Julien Hotel, was burned. The flames also destroyed Fellow's and Hare's Planeing mill and a large pile of wood. "On account of the fact that there were no fire engines in town, the fire was difficult to handle."

Wm. Derthick speared a pickerel in the Kishwaukee weighing 13 3/4 pounds.

News from Capron --- "A number of citizens leaving for Kansas. Mr. Cornell's Cheese Factory in full blast, Frank Robinson in charge."

Board of Trustees considering the organization of a fire department.

The proposed constitution of the state of Illinois published for the first time.

August Dr. Lake experimenting on a new variety of grapes named "The Belvidere" sold about 250 roots to Hotchkiss and Mundy for \$500.

Mr. Early and General Allen C. Fuller elected state Senators.

January Wendell Phillips spoke at Union Hall under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A.

Mrs. Nancy P. Fuller, wife of General Fuller, died May 18.

Croquet very popular among the men-folks, some of the games being played near the livery stable on the north side. Luther Lawrence is mentioned as "one of the crack players".

Seventeen year locusts made their appearance.

Strawberries very plentiful this year. Cherries very plentiful this year.

Apples very plentiful this year. A number of cider mills started to keep them from spoiling.

Luke Teeple sold 12 Chester White hogs at 7¢ a pound.

December 20 Early in the morning a fire was discovered in the South Baptist Church which was being repaired. A strong breeze was blowing and the church was practically consumed. The dwelling place of Charles Abbe adjoining was also burned.

1872

S. P. Stevenson awarded the contract for "keeping the poor".

1873

Among advertisements were J. H. Saxton, furniture, and Wm. Haywood, Agricultural implements.

Reverend F. C. Easton, pastor of the Presbyterian Church was appointed commissioner from Illinois to the World's Fair in Vienna.

"This was a raw, wet spring."

The Kishwaukee bridge, near Big Thunder Mill broke down June 26 while a load of grain was being driven across.

July 4 At the Fourth of July celebration a heavy rain came up and the last part was held in Adelphi Hall. Five hundred couples participated in a ball in the evening.

November 7 A hunting match for a game supper was arranged. The captains were George Hurlbut and H. F. Bowley. Thirty men were on each side, including a number of our prominent citizens; the losers to give a supper at the Julien House. In the hunt, Mr. Bowley's side came out a little ahead. About 80 people took part in the supper.



The Adelphic debating Society was organized by the young people and held in the North side school house.

#### 1874

April A meeting was held to revive the Ladies' Literary Association. It was reported that the old library consisted of about 200 volumes and it was decided to reorganize the work of the Association. Among the ladies most interested were Mrs. M. E. Leonard, Miss E. Dutton, Mrs. R. S. Molony and Mrs. Glasner.

Belvidere Library Association opened its library at Miss Jenner's.

July 4 Fourth of July procession of school children a mile long — races in the afternoon — a torch light procession in the evening.

Baseball had a considerable run this year.

The question of organizing a fire department was taken up.

Belvidere Library removed from Miss Jenner's to the Post Office.

#### 1875

An old fashioned spelling match was held in Adelphi Hall. D. B. Petit and General Fuller were monitors. Among those who took part were Nathan Smedley, Judge Wales W. Wood, and O. H. Wright. The winners were Doctor and Mrs. F. S. Whitman.

April 1 A. O. Williams' drug store caught fire and burned, together with Petit and Bowley's Jewelry store. The citizens turned out in great numbers and succeeded in saving the adjoining buildings.

Belvidere library's annual report shows 354 books, of which 124 were the result of a library formed 20 years ago. The library is now open one hour on Wednesdays, one hour on Saturday afternoon and one hour on Saturday Eve.

Nine new kerosene burners were substituted for an equal number of street lights, which later were quite unsatisfactory, as they sometimes "became as dim as an ordinary lightning bug", according to the newspaper.

The Public Square (Court House Hill) was fenced.

#### 1877

May The Belvidere library has grown to over 1000 volumes.



1878

January "A temperance crusade started, the speaker was Dr. McCollister from Michigan. Enthusiastic meetings — several temperance clubs were formed. Over 2,500 signed the pledge and wore the ribbons which marked the club membership".

"The younger people of Belvidere took part in the temperance movement by organizing into a "Band of Hope". The children were divided into companies of 10 each, and captains appointed for each company. Among the captains were many who, afterward became prominent citizens in Belvidere."

The gutters on State and Mechanics street (Lincoln Avenue) were relaid with oak planks.

June Caledonia station took fire during a storm and burned to the ground.

July One of the most severe storms in Belvidere history took place. The spire of the South Baptist Church struck by lightning and all water courses overflowed their banks.

1879

January Garden Prairie Library Association was formed.

March In this month, Belvidere "went no license" (Prohibition)

March Ice broke up in the river, taking a piece of the Baltic Mill dam with it.

The Board of Trustees prohibited cattle running at large in the public highway in the city limits after July 1.

July 4 Celebrated in Doty's pasture. O. H. Wright was the orator and General Hurlbut president of the day. In the evening there were some fireworks and some damage was done by teams running away.

1880

April General Grant passed through Belvidere, making a short speech from the depot platform.

Wolves were very destructive in the northern part of the county. Many of the farmers lost sheep.



July 4 "--- was celebrated as usual in Doty's Flats. A cannon which prematurely exploded in the morning seriously injured several young men."

General John A. Logan spoke in Belvidere on the Court House Square.

1881

General Stephen A. Hurlbut was appointed United States Minister to Peru.

1882

January A large number of friends surprised Mrs. Towner on her 84th birthday. Mrs. Towner, who came here with her husband in 1835, related her experience with the drunken Indian and stated that there were about 300 Indians inhabiting this region at that time.

March 28 General Hurlbut died suddenly in Lima, Peru. The burial of General Hurlbut was one of the most impressive occasions ever held in Belvidere. At least 10,000 people were assembled together and the principal places of business, public buildings and many private residences were draped in mourning. Many people came from all over the northern part of the state. A large number of Knights Templar and other Masons and military companies took part in the procession. Reverend Dr. Ker of Rockford, made the address and other speakers paid tribute to the dead soldier and statesman. General Hurlbut was buried in the Belvidere cemetery.

Persons who burglarized the Post Office were captured and tried in the U. S. court in Chicago.

1883

It was decided to build a city hall on the flats --- a lot being donated by Samuel Longcor.

The library now had 2,388 volumes.

October General Allen C. Fuller offered to the city \$5,000 to be expended for books for a free library --- to be known as the "Ida Public Library" in memory of his daughter. The offer was accepted and the library established.

1884

"Paul Sobeleski, an exiled Polish patriot, died. He was a man of very liberal



education, speaking in some seven different languages. He was a farmer near Belvidere for 18 years, after being driven from his native land. He took part in the revolution of 1830 in Poland. In 1881, he published a book on "Poets and Poetry of Poland".

December 14 Sunday evening the largest fire up to that time in Belvidere history took place. It destroyed 10 buildings, including Parkhill Coal yards and several warehouses. The loss was from 15 to 20 thousand dollars.

## 1885

March Two hand fire engines and a hook and ladder apparatus were purchased in Chicago. Cost \$625.

February It was voted to transfer the town library to the "Ida Public Library" which opened July 25, on the top floor of the new city hall with 6,000 volumes, of which 4,000 were new ones purchased with General Fuller's donation. Mayor Whitney gave the opening address, followed by Charles E. Fuller. Much credit is due the ladies of the early library for their work in starting the enterprise.

### Salaries of City Officers in 1885

Mayor	\$150 a year
Alderman	\$ 30 a year
Clerk	\$350 from which he must furnish heat and light for the council meetings held in his office.
Treasurer	\$ 75 a year
Attorney	\$100 a year
Marshall	\$100 and fees
Police & Watchmen	\$540 a year

October 31 Simon P. Doty died at the age of 88.

## 1886

Volunteer companies were formed to operate the fire engines purchased by the city. They were as follows:

R. J. Towsley - Fire Marshall — George H. Hurlbut, Assistant  
E. P. Truesdell - Secretary and Treasurer  
Engine #1 Wm. Dawson, Foreman: Richard Land, Assistant  
Engine #2 Fred Wood, Foreman: Henry Heywood, Foreman  
Hose Company #1 George Greenlee, Foreman: Frank Towsley, Assistant  
Hose Company #2 Robert Simpson, Foreman: Ed Pepper, Assistant  
Hook & Ladder Truck Wm. Marean, Foreman



June 28 "The first spadeful of dirt was removed from the flats on the east side of South State Street for the June Manufacturing Company (now the National). A side track was run from the North Yards, which was then called the "Y".

July 5 "The lumber office of Traver, Covey, and Sands was burned early this morning." This was one of the first fires in which the new engines were used. One of the engines was named "The Tornado".

#### 1888

Much work being done this year on improvements, especially churches.

February 1 Frank T. June of the June Manufacturing Company died. The factory which Mr. June founded and its successor, the National, have held a very important place in Belvidere.

Arches were placed over the cemetery driveway. The cemetery driveways were laid out with concrete by E. P. Truesdell.

#### 1892

The Belvidere band was reorganized under the leadership of William Bowley and numbered about twenty pieces.

#### 1894

<u>November</u>	Wales W. Wood	Elected Judge
	Cassius Church	Elected Treasurer
	Floyd Smith	Elected Sheriff
	Levi Fitzer	Elected Superintendent of Schools
	William Bowley	Elected County Clerk

So the "Standard closes its pages and its place was taken by the Belvidere Northwestern and, later, by the Belvidere Daily Republican.